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ABSTRACT

This publication presents a system of proactive classroom management for use in elementary school, grades K-6. Characteristics of the proactive concept are described as: (1) planning for prevention rather than reaction to behavior problems; (2) considering the classroom as a total process of facilitating achievement as well as appropriate behavior; (3) dealing with the entire class rather than with individual student behavior; and (4) defining behavior management as an entire system utilizing the principles of behavior theory rather than isolated techniques. An overview is provided of behavioral principles that will give teachers a broad-based understanding of why children behave and misbehave. A classroom management system is presented based on behavioral principles. The book is organized into eight chapters: (1) The Behavior Management Hierarchy; (2) Classroom Environment; (3) Scheduling; (4) Affecting Antecedents: Rules and Routines; (5) Reinforcement Strategies; (6) Parental Involvement; (7) Using Consequences To Affect Behaviors; and (8) Concluding Remarks, consisting of a checklist to help in assessing the classroom and for troubleshooting behavior problems. (LL)

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is to present a system of proactive classroom management for use in elementary classrooms. Proactive classroom management is a relatively new concept in classroom behavior management strategies. Gettinger (1)* described three characteristics of proactive classroom management. The first characteristic deals with the "proactive" concept, which is to prevent behavior problems rather than react to them. In this way, proactive management involves planning ahead to avoid a problem. The second characteristic considers the total process of the classroom, including ways not only to facilitate appropriate classroom behavior but also ways to facilitate achievement. Traditional methods of classroom management treat the instructional realm separately from behavior management. Finally, proactive classroom management deals with the entire class rather than with individual student behavior. It is a group approach in that if the group functions well, then the individual will follow the group. Sanford, Emmer, and Clements (2) summarized the concept of proactive classroom management to include "all the things teachers must do to foster student involvement and cooperation in classroom activities and to establish a productive working environment" (p. 56).

What then is behavior management? When teachers were asked what it meant to them, answers varied from a way to control children in the classroom to the use of time-out for misbehaviors. Behavior theory, in general, has been misconceived by the general public for a variety of reasons. Initially, the science of behaviorism meant to many people the training of rats to run mazes or the teaching of pigeons to peck at a disc for food. The very thought that people were controlled in some way or that we could understand human behavior through scientific methods seemed foreign. The public protested that we were "free" and that we were not controlled like some rats in a cage. As behavior theory became applied more to real-life settings and, as we now apply it to classrooms and classroom management, behavioral techniques still do not get a fair shake. Some teachers are heard to say, "Oh, I tried that behavior management stuff we learned in class. Some of it works, but I don't buy it entirely." Or, teachers are tired of the same old material presented over and over. "Use positive reinforcement to get children motivated. Have consequences for misbehaviors." The teaching community can become saturated with this material. So, why more material on behavior management? Because the material presented here puts behavior management into action, it is designed to be *useful* to the classroom teacher—not theoretical. One of the problems with much of the behavior management material presented to teachers is that techniques are taught in isolation. A teacher then tries to implement a technique separately from the entire classroom as a system that must be worked within its entirety. This book defines behavior management as an entire system, not an isolated technique.

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*Numbers in parentheses appearing in the text refer to the references at the end of the chapters.

Behavior management involves a system designed to effectively manage and control students in the classroom using the principles of behavior theory. Behavior management is not a singular technique such as positive reinforcement or time-out. It is not that simple. Instead, we need to understand behavior, understand what makes children behave and misbehave, and then use that knowledge to develop a positive learning environment and a pleasant experience for the teacher and the students. When we use a system, it makes sense that there should be a rhyme and a reason to implementing that system. To that purpose, the system presented here is a hierarchy.

The hierarchy of behavior management in the classroom allows for a look at the classroom system in terms of levels of impact. We begin with a broad perspective of the classroom. We will look at the classroom environment and how we can use that environment as part of our behavior management system. We will look at the cues the children receive from their environment

Figure 1
The Behavior Management Hierarchy[a]

Classroom environment	Least intensive (broad base to build upon)
Scheduling	
Classroom rules	
Reinforcement procedures	
Parental involvement	
Consequating behaviors	Most intensive

[a] The hierarchy builds one step upon another. One level must be stable before moving on to the next.

and how that affects their behavior. Next, we will look at scheduling concerns and how these can impact the learning experience. With effective use of scheduling, we can improve upon the teaching lesson and the children's willingness to learn. Classroom rules are an inevitable part of any behavior management system, and by learning appropriate rule setting we can maximize the effects of those rules. Reinforcement is a standard within any classroom system; but, again, the appropriate use of those reinforcers makes the difference. Parental involvement is key to an effective management system. Enlisting parental support will strengthen the behavior system in the class. When we have misbehaviors, we also need appropriate methods for consequating behaviors. We place consequences at the most intense level because it is more favorable to use positives first and then only afterwards to resort to consequences. Figure 1 outlines the six levels presented in this book.

An advantage of the hierarchical system is that it gives the classroom teacher a starting point. The task of setting up an effective behavior management system can be overwhelming, but the hierarchy gives us a place to begin. We also can use the hierarchy for troubleshooting what may be going wrong in an established system. We can examine each level to determine where the system is breaking down. We can check to determine that we have covered our bases and that we understand how each level impacts another. If our classroom environment is chaotic, then our reinforcers will not work. If our schedule does not allow children to work when they have the most energy, then our classroom rules may not be effective in handling behaviors. Each level must be under control before we move to the next level. This behavior management hierarchy is truly a system, a system that will break down if one of the parts is dysfunctional.

The intent of this book is first to give an overview of behavioral principles that will give teachers a broad-based understanding of why children behave and misbehave. Then, using this knowledge, we will build a classroom management system based on behavioral principles. By the end of the book, the reader should be able to identify behavior problems or classroom problems, analyze why they are occurring, and apply the behavior management hierarchy to find a solution. Remember that the keys to proactive classroom management are to plan ahead, to consider the total process of the classroom, and to manage the group instead of individuals.

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Chapter 1

THE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY

UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOR: A–B–C ASSESSMENT

Before we can begin to put together our behavior management system, we must understand the basic principles upon which behavior management is built—the science of behavior. In order to understand behavior, we will use the A–B–C assessment approach: *A*ntecedent–*B*ehavior–*C*onsequence. Although other approaches have been developed, this is the most simple and most applicable for our purposes.

Defining Behavior

We begin with defining behavior because this is the target of our management system and of our interventions. Behavior is something we can see; we can measure it; we can agree on the words to describe it; and it is something we can count or time. Behavior is *not* feelings, thoughts, or intentions—things that have different interpretations to different people. It is this point that gave behaviorism its bad name or the belief that "behaviorists don't believe people have feelings." Of course, people do have feelings. We just cannot see them; we cannot know if we are effectively changing feelings because we cannot count or measure a feeling of happiness or sadness. When we ask, "What is happiness?" to a room of fifteen adults, we get fifteen different answers. Feelings are personal and individual; thus, we cannot define as our goal "I want my students to be happy" because we will never know if we have met our goal. What we *can* do is to agree on which behaviors are manifestations of happiness, and then we can count those behaviors. In that way we will know if we are really making our children happier. We can count the number of positive comments made by the students, and we can count the number of times a child smiles when he/she is in the classroom. Figure 1–1 shows examples and nonexamples of behaviors we can use for behavior management purposes.

Defining Antecedents

Once we have defined the behavior, we can begin to analyze the chain of events that occurs around that behavior in order to help us to understand why children behave in a certain way; then, we can work to change or enhance the behavior. Let's look at the "A" in our A–B–C assessment that stands for antecedent. An antecedent is *anything* that occurs *before* a behavior happens. An antecedent can be a person, place, time, event, object, or even another behavior. Figure 1–2 gives examples of what could serve as antecedents to a behavior. Antecedents are important because once we see what occurs before to signal a behavior, we can stop that signal and cease the chain of events. We also can manipulate antecedents to promote an appropriate behavior. Antecedents may be difficult to pinpoint. Careful observation is necessary to try to uncover the event that happens before the behavior occurs; for example, the

Figure 1-1
Examples and Nonexamples of Targets of Intervention in Behavior Management

Nonexamples	*Examples*
Learning	Length of time working on an assignment
Being good	Sitting quietly while teacher talks
Having fun	Laughing during an activity
Making progress	Raising a letter grade

scenario presented in Figure 1–2 of Bob's mother getting ready for work and Bob wetting his pants. Initially, Bob's mother thought that the wet pants were a product of too many fluids for breakfast and a weak bladder. However, closer examination revealed that Bob never wet his pants on the days his mother did not go to work; thus, it appeared that the event of his mother going to work always preceded the behavior. To fully understand why the behavior occurs, we also must examine consequences.

Figure 1-2
Examples of Antecedents

Example of PERSON serving as an antecedent:
Antecedent: Sally's mother walks into the classroom.
Behavior: Sally cries in the classroom.

Example of PLACE serving as an antecedent:
Antecedent: Joe and his father arrive at the doctor's office.
Behavior: Joe has a tantrum.

Example of TIME serving as an antecedent:
Antecedent: It is 3:00 p.m., school is out at 3:15 p.m.
Behavior: The children become restless, misbehaviors increase.

Example of EVENT serving as an antecedent:
Antecedent: Bob's mother is getting ready for work.
Behavior: Bob wets his pants.

Example of OBJECT serving as an antecedent:
Antecedent: Ginger's sister takes out her favorite doll.
Behavior: Ginger and her sister get in a fight.

Example of BEHAVIOR serving as an antecedent:
Antecedent: Jerrad fights on the playground.
Behavior: Jerrad is distracted during seatwork and does not work.

Defining Consequences

A consequence is *anything* that occurs *after* the behavior. A consequence can be a person, place, object, event, or another behavior. Figure 1–3 gives the consequences for the chain of behaviors that occurred in Figure 1–2. Consequences can be easier to spot because once the behavior has occurred we can observe what happens immediately following that behavior. In order to put the final piece of our A–B–C assessment together, we need to understand consequences more in-depth.

Consequences can do three things to a behavior: (a) maintain, (b) increase, or (c) decrease. Consequences that increase or maintain a behavior are called "reinforcers"; those that decrease a behavior are called "punishers." There are two kinds of reinforcers: (a) positive reinforcement, and (b) negative reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is giving something positive such as food, attention, kind words, or money—anything that is perceived to be positive by the receiver. Negative reinforcement is more difficult to understand. Many teachers believe wrongly that negative reinforcement either is doing something negative to a child to get him/her to stop misbehaving or is reinforcing a child by something negative. Negative reinforcement actually is the *removal* of something negative following the behavior that, in turn, *increases* that behavior. In practice, the negative stimulus occurs, and then we must do something to stop the negative stimulus. Whatever we do to make it stop is the behavior that increases. We are reinforced by not having the negative stimulus occur. The behavior that made it stop happens sooner, more quickly, and with more intensity as we learn that our behavior changes the negative stimulus. A few examples will help clarify the concept:

1. A loud buzzer goes off in a classroom whenever children are not working. The buzzer goes off when children get back to work. The negative stimulus, the buzzer, is removed after the appropriate behavior—

working—occurs. Over time, the working behavior increases as the children try to avoid the negative stimulus.

2. A child wants the teacher to come over to his/her desk and he/she waves his/her hand and yells, "Teacher!

Figure 1-3
Examples of Consequences

Example of PERSON serving as a consequence:

Antecedent: Joe and his father arrive at the doctor's office.
Behavior: Joe has a tantrum.
Consequence: Joe's mother is called, and she comes to comfort him.

Example of PLACE serving as a consequence:

Antecedent: Joe fights on the playground.
Behavior: Joe is distracted during seatwork and does not work.
Consequence: Joe has to sit in the hall.

Example of OBJECT serving as a consequence:

Antecedent: Ginger's sister takes out her doll.
Behavior: Ginger and her sister get in a fight.
Consequence: Ginger's mother tells sister to let Ginger play with the doll.

Example of EVENT serving as a consequence:

Antecedent: Bob's mother is getting ready for work.
Behavior: Bob wets his pants.
Consequence: Bob's mother delays going to work to change Bob's pants.

Example of BEHAVIOR serving as a consequence:

Antecedent: It is 3:00 p.m., school gets out at 3:15 p.m.
Behavior: Children become restless, misbehaviors increase.
Consequence: Teacher sends children out to the playground to run around.

> Teacher!" The teacher attends to him/her in order to stop the negative stimulus.

The teacher will respond more quickly and more often (the behavior increases) so that she can stop the negative stimulus. The concept of negative reinforcement will be important when we discuss how many misbehaviors are maintained.

Punishment, by definition, decreases behavior. There are two types of punishers: (a) application of an aversive, or (b) withdrawal of a positive. When we apply something negative immediately following a behavior, we see a decrease in the rate of the behavior over time. For example, we may put a check next to a name, demand extra work, or ask for a chore such as sweeping the floor. We also can remove something positive immediately following the behavior. For example, we can take away a favorite toy, move a close friend away from the misbehaving child, or take away a privilege. The key to punishment is to remember that it is punishment only if we see a decrease in the target behavior. Thus, if we remove a child from a positive experience and place him or her in time-out, and the behavior does *not* decrease, then, by definition, it is not a punisher.

WHY CHILDREN MISBEHAVE

Now, as we look at behaviors, we can pinpoint and identify a behavior; we can examine what happens before the behavior (i.e., what signals that the behavior is going to occur); and then we can see what the consequence of the behavior is. One piece of our puzzle is still missing; we have not uncovered why children misbehave. There are two basic reasons for misbehavior: (a) either the child is being reinforced for the misbehavior, or (b) the child does not possess the necessary skill. If the child is getting reinforcement for the behavior, then the behavior will be maintained or will increase. The child may know the correct behavior, but does not perform appropriately because the reinforcement for misbehaving is stronger than the reinforcement for appropriate behavior. For example, the class clown gets a lot of positive reinforcement from the laughter of his/her classmates. This reinforcement from peers is stronger than either the reinforcement for behaving appropriately or the threat of punishment. This phenomenon may be difficult to observe. For example, from using the scenario presented in the examples involving Joe and his inability to work following a fight on the playground (Fig. 1–3), we can see that the consequence for Joe's inability to concentrate is to sit in the hall. The teacher assumes this is a punishment. However, when Joe is in the hall, he gets to watch other children go by, he can ask a passerby for help with his assignment, and the pressure is off to conform to classroom standards of behavior. In other words, he is actually enjoying the time in the hall and is getting reinforced. As we look at other scenarios, we can see the reinforcing component presented in other misbehaviors in our examples. Jerrad's tantrum is reinforced by his mother's comfort. The classroom's restlessness and misbehavior are reinforced by getting to play outside. Bob's wetting accident is reinforced by getting to spend a few more minutes with his mother while she changes his pants. These hidden reinforcers are the key to understanding children's misbehaviors.

The other reason children might misbehave is because of a skill deficit. A skill deficit is present when the child does not possess the skills to behave appropriately. The child might never have been taught one skill or might never have been exposed to conditions that would warrant use of the skill. The term *skill deficit* is not intended to fault the child but merely expresses the absence of a skill. For example, a kindergarten student who has never attended preschool usually does not have the skills to sit at a desk for long periods of time. In this regard, he or she has a skill deficit. This may be exhibited in several misbehaviors such as jumping out of the chair, talking to neighbors, or calling out to the teacher. Another example is the child who has never been taught what "no" means and may come from an overindulged family life. Because the child does not understand what "no" means, he/she cannot respond appropriately to this as a command. For young children, skill deficits can be a major factor in understanding their misbehavior—a reason that is often overlooked by teachers.

A–B–C ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

In order to make sense of A-B-C assessment and its impact for behavior management, the following checklist will be helpful. When you look at the misbehaviors in your class, examine the behavior carefully and methodically.

1. Define the behavior problem: Is it measurable? Observable?
2. Antecedents: What happens immediately *before* the behavior occurs?
3. Consequences: What happens immediately *after* the behavior occurs?
4. Does the child possess the skill or is there a skill deficit?
5. Is the child being reinforced for the misbehavior?

Using this checklist, you can complete your assessment of behavior that is key to targeting behaviors for interventions and using the appropriate method to deal with the behavior problem. The following case study highlights the use of behavioral assessment to deal with classroom misbehaviors.

CASE STUDY

Mr. Terrell teaches third grade at Grantview Elementary. He has twenty-six students this year, eighteen of them boys! He has heard that the boys can be difficult to handle, so he plans ahead with strict guidelines for appropriate behavior in class, along with well-outlined consequences. The children begin the year without incident, and Mr. Terrell thinks he has the problem licked; then one day, while the students are completing their seatwork, Mark decides he's had enough of this seatwork. He lets out a loud yawn, which is greeted by giggles from his classmates. Mr. Terrell scans the class to see who made the noise, but he is unsure. He decides to ignore the behavior, thinking that to attend to it may be to reinforce it. He had been taught in his behavior management series at the university to ignore some misbehaviors. Mark has been quietly looking at his paper; as he looks up, he notices a few classmates smiling at him. He lets out another loud yawn, which is greeted by even louder laughter from his classmates. Mr. Terrell clears his throat and tells the class to settle down. By now, a few more classmates look challengingly at Mark. He obliges, and lets out another loud yawn that breaks up the entire class—leaving Mr. Terrell to yell for silence.

1. What is the behavior?
   Mark yawns out loud.
2. What happens directly before the behavior?
   The first time the behavior occurred, we might suggest that it was the result of boredom. However, the next several times Mark yawns, he knew the consequence of his first yawn and was then challenged to yawn again. The antecedent in this chain is the students' challenging looks at Mark.
3. What happens directly after the behavior?
   The students laugh with Mark.
4. Is there a skill deficit?
   Probably not. Mark knows the class rules and has demonstrated previously that he was able to follow them initially.
5. Is the behavior getting reinforced?
   Most certainly. Mark is getting positively reinforced by the laughter of his classmates.

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Chapter 2

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

The first place to begin a comprehensive behavior management system is with the physical space—the empty classroom. While few of us have a choice in the space given to us, it is what we do with that space that makes the difference. The classroom environment allows the teacher not only to represent his/her personality, but also it can set up parameters that govern children's behavior. Walking through schools, one can see extremes in different classrooms—from a classroom decorated simply with few wall hangings and neat rows of desks, to classrooms filled with colorful wall hangings and clusters of desks. Before we condemn the simple classroom completely, we should ask whether the other kind of classroom presents too many distractors to make learning and behavior management feasible. A careful balance can enhance the classroom environment and meet the needs of the child and the teacher. Planning for an effective classroom environment begins before the children enter the classroom.

DESK AND TABLE ARRANGEMENTS

Through the years children have been arranged in the classroom on benches, at tables, in desks, in rows, in circles, and in clusters. Teachers experiment with different arrangements continually, but is there any real research to support one arrangement over another? The answer ends up to be not as simple as we might think; in fact, the desk arrangement's impact on performance may depend more on the task than on the arrangement.

Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of using rows of desks rather than tables. Axelrod, Hall, and Tams (1) demonstrated that traditional seating in rows increases on-task behavior, while it decreases disruptions. Wheldall and

Lam (6) compared rows of desks with table formation and found that in the desk formation, on-task behaviors doubled. Class disruptions tripled in the table formation. Teachers' positive comments on academic behavior also were affected by the formations, with higher rates of positive comments during the desk formation.

Rosenfield, Lambert, and Black (4) compared rows, circles, and clusters in their study of desk arrangement and found more on-task behavior with circles and clusters than with rows. However, the task observed was a brainstorming session for a writing assignment. The students were expected to collaborate and make suggestions for ideas on the assignment. The circle arrangement seemed to be helpful for facilitating pupil interaction during discussions where active student participation was the goal. There were no differential effects found for disruptive behaviors. The circle arrangement does not necessarily mean a disruptive class. The students made more out-of-turn comments, but the comments were task-relevant. The students showed more withdrawn behavior in the rows. There was more hand-raising in the clusters, which the authors suggested was because the students had to get the teacher's attention—more so than in the circles.

Overall, it would seem that the best desk arrangement for everyday learning in the classroom is rows of desks. There appears to be more on-task behavior and less disruptions than with other arrangements. If there is room for space between the students, this may further decrease disruptions as students can keep their hands to themselves and their eyes on their own paper. For creative projects, group discussions, and activities where the goal is active student participation, either clusters or a circle is the arrangement of choice. Students seem to engage more freely in these arrangements and, if other behavioral techniques are in play, disruptions do not have to increase.

ENVIRONMENT

A classroom that is brightly decorated is a cheerful workplace; however, the teacher also must use caution that he/she is not creating distractions in the workplace. Children can be easily distracted; and, if the calendar reminding them that Halloween or Valentine's Day is coming soon, their minds may wander toward candy rather than toward their lessons. Overly decorated walls might make a room appear chaotic, and children might have difficulty concentrating as well. Classroom walls can be incorporated into instruction and behavior management.

Creekmore (2) developed a helpful organization for the effective use of classroom walls that is based on learning theory as well as on research. He used two basic principles of learning theory: (a) For children to learn, there must be an interaction between the material being taught and the student; and (b) students must be on-task or focused if new and/or complicated material is to be acquired and maintained by the student. There are three basic activities that occur in the learning environment: (a) acquisition of material, (b) maintenance of material, and (c) generalization of material to new situations. Creekmore took these tasks and utilized the classroom walls to enhance these learning activities. He called one wall the "acquisition wall," which includes the chalkboard and at least one bulletin board. The acquisition wall is used to teach new concepts to the class or to reintroduce material that the students have had difficulty learning. The wall should contain only those materials to be used in your teaching lesson and these should be removed following the end of the lesson. The idea is to not have any competing materials on the wall; thus, the child's attention is focused on the lesson currently being taught.

Following a lesson, material can be placed on a "maintenance wall." This wall is to the right or left of the acquisition wall. The materials on this wall review or reorient children to the material. The maintenance wall also is a good place for any concept support materials, such as number lines and alphabet letters. Creekmore pointed out that a good reason not to put these "help" items on the acquisition wall is that children can rely on them too easily as a visual aid rather than depending on cognitive processes to remember these items. The maintenance wall helps to strengthen the material learned in the lesson because students can refer to the concepts taught in the lesson and can review the material again.

The "dynamic wall" shows materials that can be found on typical elementary school walls such as theme materials (e.g., ghosts, Santa Claus, hearts, Easter bunnies) and calendars. The wall can be either a side wall or the back wall. It is called "dynamic" because the materials should be changed and should not be on permanent display. The dynamic wall can be used for children's work, notices, and so forth. Items that are not particularly related to the teaching lessons but add to the classroom environment are put on the dynamic wall.

Research has demonstrated that a substantially higher percentage of acquisition and generalizations are reached in the acquisition wall classroom than in a traditional classroom (2). More research is needed to further validate the use of the acquisition wall, but it appears that this classroom setup helps children to focus on the task by eliminating distractors and setting predictable parameters where learning material is presented. The maintenance wall is helpful for children who need more review and more help in preparing seatwork based on a new concept. This could help to free a teacher's time because the children can refer to the maintenance wall.

Another way to use one of the classroom walls is to develop a system of public posting of academic progress and/or behavioral goals. Displaying a student's progress in academics or behaviors can provide motivation and improve performance. Research has demonstrated the positive effects of public posting on both high- and low-ability learners, with low-ability learners improving the most (5). There are several key elements to setting up a public-posting system. First, there must be a visual display that is prominently displayed so that children can see the posting.

The display gives visual feedback to the students and should be used frequently as well as immediately to help children see their daily progress. For example, immediately after a child finishes a reading unit, he or she could check off that unit or move his or her marker one unit forward. In this way, the children see immediate results. Second, public posting should be a positive measure and should reflect success of the individual. The students should not be pitted one against the other or ranked, but the individual should work toward his/her own progress. The child's point of reference for success should be his/her own work. To illustrate, if a child finishes fifteen math problems one day, then he or she can set a goal to try to finish sixteen the next day. The child then feels success measured by his/her own progress rather than by being compared to the students who can finish thirty problems a day.

For the public-posting system to be most effective, there must be a built-in system for positive praise and reinforcement. The teacher should comment on individual and class improvement. Comments to individual students should be made privately or in a small group; thus, those students who are having difficulty do not feel left out. Group comments can include such remarks as the number of students who beat their old scores or who achieved a goal. In this way, even the low-ability students can enjoy the group praise. For added impact, you can ask the principal or other visitors to comment on the board. Children also can be taught to reinforce each other. This peer reinforcement can be very helpful. To add even more powerful reinforcement, tangible reinforcers such as prizes or privileges can be incorporated into the system.

Public posting also can affect behavior problems. Goals can be made for the class to reflect a group goal to achieve a behavioral objective. For example, the class might try to increase on-task performance by working for five minutes without an interruption. There might be a class objective to be more polite, and the children could try to say "please" and "thank you" five times a day. A group reward could be administered following achievement of a goal. Sometimes it is not necessary to have behavioral objectives as the focus of the public posting system because just the posting of academic success can have an effect on behavior problems. One study used public posting to advise daily quiz results and found a large reduction in behavioral disruptions (3). Children who are on-task do not have time to be disruptive! Remember to keep the public posting dynamic, visible, immediate, positive, and individually referenced. Figure 2–1 shows a few examples of public-posting systems. By using your imagination and grading scores, your public-posting system can reflect a motivating, dynamic part of your classroom environment.

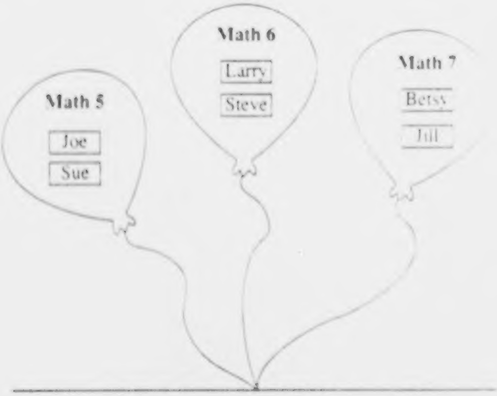
CLASSROOM FLOW

In assessing the classroom, it is important to look at the traffic patterns in the room. Sit in the empty classroom and imagine the traffic flow during the day. Begin with the children entering the room. They will need adequate space to hang their coats and belongings and to find their seat. Obstructing coat racks with garbage cans on the floor, boxes of supplies, desks, and the like will create chaos and clutter in an area that can already be busy. Keep floor space clear, and allow several feet around this area so that children are not tripping over each other. Labeling coat racks or cubby holes can help ease the chaos. Children will learn where their space is, and this can cut down on confusion when hanging up materials. Using a color system for names or other differential labeling (e.g., shapes, animals, etc.) can be helpful at the end of the day. The teacher can call out for different groups to gather their belongings: "All children whose names are on red circles can get their coats." The experience can then be part of learning as well.

During the day, children will be involved in seatwork, groups, and independent play activities. Ask yourself whether children can move about the room with the minimal amount of disruption to others. Areas of congestion include the drinking

Figure 2-1
Examples of Public-Posting Systems

Reading - Story #	104	105	106	107	108	109	110
Sarah M.	✓	✓	✓				
Janet R.	✓						
David P.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Jacob K.	✓	✓					



fountain, teacher's desk, central areas for turning in papers, the pencil sharpener, garbage can, classroom door, and any other central locations for supplies and books. There are several ways to handle these congestions. One way is to structure the environment by allowing more space in heavily trafficked areas. Allow wide alleys between desks and traffic areas, and move equipment such as TV monitors to corners where they will not get in the way. Another way to handle congestion is to limit access by way of classroom rules. For example, only one child can be at the pencil sharpener or drinking fountain at a time. Routines can be made to avoid congestion by having children hand out supplies such as scissors and glue or by having children collect papers. In this way, central locations can be minimized. The most helpful way to determine the traffic needs in your classroom is to walk through the day to determine where traffic flow is greatest. Make a sketch of the classroom layout and play with different arrangements before you actually move furniture!

WORK STATIONS

One way to enhance the traffic flow and to decrease behavior problems is to develop work stations or areas where students can find their own materials, organize their materials, and begin to work. This can develop independent work habits that are important skills and building blocks for later schooling. Children should know where to find supplies as needed and where to go after an activity is completed. Remember that your desk also can be considered a work station and can serve an important function in traffic flow and behavior management. Your desk should be where you can easily see all children. It should not obstruct traffic flow within the classroom, and you also should consider how much you use your desk. During class time, do you like to sit at your desk and grade papers? If yes, then your desk should be in a location to facilitate children visiting you there. Or, do you rarely sit at your desk, except after the students are gone? If yes, then your desk can be placed out of the way where it is not cluttering the classroom.

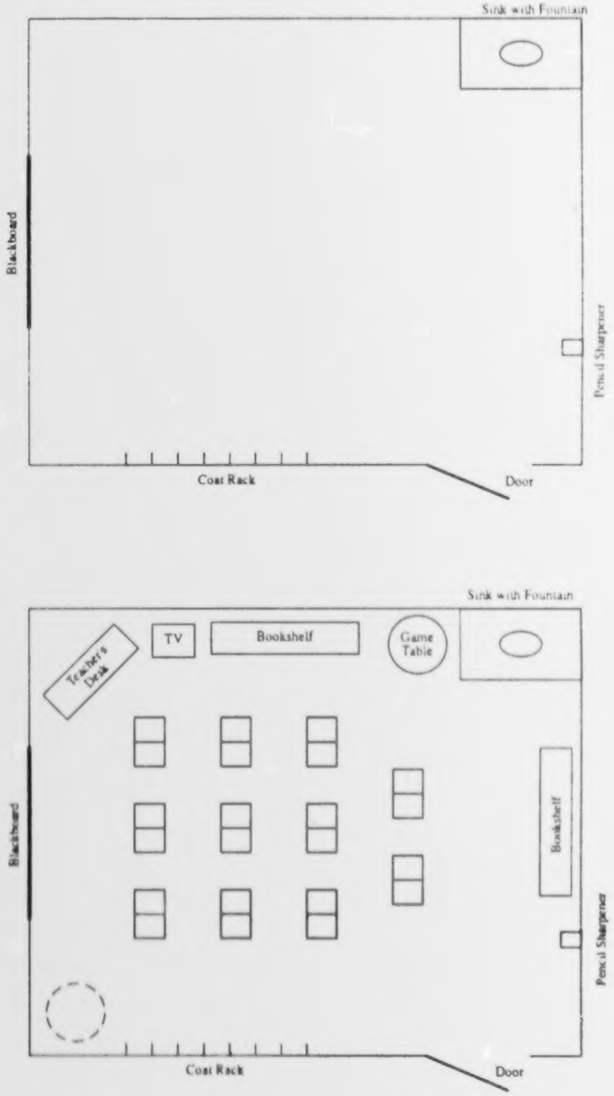
By developing work areas, the room becomes less congested and the children are able to move about freely. Furthermore, children can learn to discriminate what is appropriate behavior for different activities and different parts of the room. The book-and-puzzle corner is a place for quiet voices. The free-play table or toy table is for louder voices. Children can be self-directed, moving from one activity to the next, and having little idle time to get into trouble. When children finish work early, they can move to another activity and not bother their peers. Again, the use of a sketch of your classroom will help you to organize both traffic flow and work stations and also help you to visualize how to maximize your classroom space for better behavior management.

CASE STUDY

Ms. Morehouse entered her new classroom and groaned at the small and poorly organized space. She walked around the room and inventoried her equipment—student desks and chairs, a large round table without accompanying chairs, a teacher's desk and chair, a TV monitor, bookshelves, and a waste basket. She drew an approximation of the space and the permanent fixtures in the room (see Figure 2–2). She immediately saw that with the pencil sharpener near the door it would probably be best to limit access to it by making a rule that only one person could be at the sharpener at a time. The same was true of the sink, which, stuck in a corner, could cause congestion as children went to get a drink. One solution would be to allow only one child at a time to get a drink, or to allow the class to get drinks only at certain times during the day. As a group, the class could line up along one wall, and children could exit to one side of the sink. With only one blackboard, there was no choice as to where the teaching wall would be. The bulletin board adjacent to this wall could be the maintenance wall, as well as where the public-posting system could go. This wall is in view of all students and could be posted with an alphabet and number line. A daily posting of progress could be viewed by all children from their desks. The back wall would be a good place for decorations and seasonal wall hangings. Children's artwork could go on this wall or above the coat rack.

The next problem was the position of furniture. With such a small classroom and twenty-two desks, it was not possible to have all desks separated. Ms. Morehouse decided to compromise and place desks in pairs. This would allow for an

Figure 2-2
Model of Classroom



easy separation of troublesome pairs and have the least amount of contact possible to decrease distractions. Ms. Morehouse conducted reading groups by using a small circle of chairs. She decided to make space at the front of the classroom so that she could scan it for problems during the group time. Since she does not use her desk during the school day, she moved it to one side, out of the way, but convenient enough to put papers on it and check her schedule. The TV monitor also was moved to the side wall where it could be moved easily to the front of the class where all students could view it.

Work stations were then established such that children could move to new activities once they were finished with work. The round table became a game table, placed in the back of the room where it would not distract children who were still working. The large space in the back of the class allowed easy access to the work stations in the bookshelves. The bookshelves in the rear of the class contained work supplies and baskets for turning in and picking up papers. Reading and math books were placed in the other bookcase, and were passed out by class helpers as needed. Finally, Ms. Morehouse took the time to sit at each pupil's desk to see what the child would see. This allowed her to visualize all potential problems and distractions.

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Chapter 3

SCHEDULING

Scheduling academics can affect behavior management in several ways. Children who have to work in long time frames get restless and bored, and will end up causing disruptions. Scheduling academics when a child is tired or wound up from outside activities likewise will cause problems. After recess, when children have been running around, it may be unrealistic to expect complete cooperation in the classroom. A "warm-down" activity such as listening to a story or quiet coloring can help set the mood of relaxation. Children have a short attention span for academics at this young age (only ten to twenty minutes), and it is helpful to change tasks frequently to maintain their attention. We also want to take time to think about our teaching priorities and how to make the most of the teaching day. Later, we can build on this academic time by increasing the amount of on-task time. Tuning the academics to the child's energy level will help lessen the amount of off-task behaviors in the classroom. If children are motivated, on-task, and the daily schedule runs smoothly, then the classroom will have fewer behavior problems.

SETTING UP A SCHEDULE

It is important to set your priorities before you make up your yearly schedule. This might include setting goals to help you to keep in mind what you expect your children to learn by the end of the school year. Setting goals will help you to stay on track throughout the year and also will help you to feel a sense of accomplishment during the year as you meet short-term goals. The first step in making a schedule is to list the subjects that you will be teaching. From this list, you should determine which subjects are taught on a daily basis (e.g., reading, math) and which subjects are taught less frequently (e.g., science). You also will need to determine how much time your reading groups will

Figure 3-1
Setting Up a Schedule:
Step-by-Step

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1. List subjects that you teach.

2. Set your priorities for which subjects are most important in terms of academic progress. Set goals for what you expect the children to know by the end of the year.

3. List which subjects are taught daily, and which subjects are taught on a less regular basis.

4. Determine which subjects are taught in groups. Approximate the amount of time for a group and the number of groups.

5. Balance the day with a variety of teaching methods such as whole group, small group, structured activities, unstructured activities, and seatwork.

6. Plan for transitions between activities.

7. Review the schedule for balance and smooth transitions between activities.

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take and how many groups you think you might have. This will help you to determine how much time during the day will be dedicated to groups and, in turn, how much seatwork the other students will need. Some districts have mandates regarding how much time should be spent on subjects; thus, you will need to consider this when you are deciding your time lines.

You will want to balance the amount of time spent in whole-group instruction, small-group instruction, independent seatwork, structured activities, and unstructured activities. It is through these different teaching methods that you can add variety to your class and keep your students' attention. Research indicates that children spend most of their academic day involved in independent seatwork, with less time spent in small-group and whole-group instruction (7). We also know that children achieve at higher rates when they are given more opportunities to respond (3). By breaking up the independent seatwork, not only can we keep variety, but we also can program in more chances for a child to respond and to practice skills. For example, seatwork can be difficult for young children; therefore, break it up by adding a peer-tutoring time when students can quiz each other. Group instruction can be varied by using either a straight lecture format or by rearranging desks for a more interactive approach. It is important to keep the day moving with a change at least every half hour; thus, young students will not become fatigued or bored with the activity, which often can lead to behavior problems.

Plan carefully for the first few days of school because these days will not follow your regular schedule. There will be administrative duties as well as getting-acquainted duties. Even though children may have gone through school together, they will need time to get acquainted with you and your classroom rules and procedures. We will discuss rules and routines in the next level of the hierarchy; however, now we will point out that the first few days of school is a good time to practice those routines. It is helpful to "get going" on your regular schedule by the third or fourth day. This will allow the children to get used to the daily routine more quickly.

The final word regarding scheduling concerns transitions between activities. It is important to allow time for these transitions so that, for example, thirty minutes for math does not whittle away to only twenty minutes. As students become accustomed to your schedule, the transitions will occur more quickly. Allow extra time in the beginning of the year to ensure that you are giving the amount of instruction you had intended. Figure 3–1 reviews the steps to set up your schedule.

AMOUNT OF TIME FOR LEARNING

When we talk about time spent learning, we are really talking about several different variables. There is the amount of time we allocate to learning, for example, reading is from 9:00 to 9:30. This is the amount of time a teacher sets aside for teaching a given subject. Within that alloted time is a factor that we call the engagement rate, which is the percentage of the class that is engaged in the academic materials. At any point in which you are teaching, there will be children off-task. The engagement rate helps us to determine at any point during the day how many students are paying attention and how many are not. Each individual student spends a certain amount of time engaged as well, i.e., the student engagement time or time on-task. Finally, there is the academic learning time, defined as the amount of time a student spends attending to relevant academic tasks while performing with a high rate of success (4). In this way, we know not only that the children are engaged with academic material, but also that they actually are learning. Figure 3–2 summarizes these terms and their definitions.

Caldwell, Huitt, and Graeber (1) summarized the research in this area in an attempt to understand how achievement is related to time spent learning. For an average elementary school with a school year of 180 days, the average student attends 160 days, which includes subtracting days for illness, vacations, or skipping school. The average school day is five hours, which includes approximately two hours of reading/ language arts instruction and approximately forty-five minutes of math instruction. Students are engaged approximately 60 percent of the allocated time, spending approximately seventy-two minutes on-task for reading/language arts and approximately twenty-seven minutes on-task for math. They are working successfully on relevant academic tasks for approximately half of this time, approximately thirty-six minutes each day for reading/language arts, and approximately fourteen minutes each day for math. When this time is averaged, the total number of hours of academic learning time is approximately ninety-six hours in reading/language arts and approximately thirty-seven hours in math!

Figure 3-2
Variables Used in the Concept of Time for Learning

Term	*Definition*
Allocated time	Amount of time a teacher sets aside for teaching a subject
Engagement rate	Percentage of class engaged in academic material
Student engaged time	Time on-task, or the amount of time the child is actively engaged in academic material
Academic learning time	Amount of time the student spends attending to relevant academic tasks while performing with a high rate of success

The key to academic achievement gains, then, is to increase the amount of time children are actively engaged in academic materials at a high success rate. We can reward children for outcome performance that will increase time on-task; however, for difficult tasks, research suggests that it is helpful to add a contingency for staying on-task (6). Praising children for working or using a token system for rewards, along with praise for academic performance (which can be tied into the public posting system) is helpful in increasing time on-task. It is important to note that merely praising children for staying on-task will decrease disruptive behaviors and increase attending, but this alone does not increase achievement (2). Reinforcement procedures as well as group contingencies for improving academic performance are discussed later in the hierarchy. At this point in our intervention hierarchy, it is important to be aware of the different variables involved in time spent learning. It has been demonstrated that making teachers aware of the literature on the relationship between student engagement time and achievement, along with being given feedback on their students' rate of engagement, can raise the level of engagement rate significantly (5). When we work on scheduling and finding time for academic achievement, we have to keep in mind the relationship between the time we allot to learning and the amount of time children actually spend on learning. Later on, we will discuss methods to increase the time on-task.

WHEN TO SCHEDULE ACADEMICS

When children first arrive at school, they are full of energy and might have difficulty settling into a task. Often they are bursting with information to tell you or their friends, or they may want to share something that happened on the way to school. We want to take this energy and enthusiasm and turn it into a useful activity. If we try to steer children into an activity that requires silent seatwork, we are setting ourselves up for frustration because it will take some time to reduce children's energy level. To use this energy, many teachers have found that a group discussion regarding the day ahead, a brief show and tell, and an "openings" routine help to settle down children. The "openings" is a routine in which helpers are chosen for the day, for example, the day of the week and month are presented, the weather may be discussed, and perhaps the Pledge of Allegiance is recited. Rather than seen only as a way to calm the children, learning is occurring as well. Children are learning (a) the days of the week; (b) about weather and how it impacts their day (e.g., discuss clothing to wear, whether they can play outside or not, etc.); and (c) to participate in a class discussion by sharing information. You can then end the openings discussion with a reminder of the schedule for the day, which should be posted where children can see it. The children have then had a chance to share, a chance to settle down, and will be ready for academics.

Morning is the best time for academics because children are fresh and ready to go. (Occasionally, you will have children who habitually have no energy and appear sleepy. These children might not have had breakfast or might have been kept up too late. At some point, it would be helpful to ask the child about breakfast and sleep times; if there appears to be a problem, ask the social worker or school psychologist, if you have one, to follow-up at home. You also may want to keep a few crackers in your cupboard to supplement the child's diet. Children's basic needs must be met before they are ready to learn.) It is helpful to begin the day with a group lesson. This will give children the independent seatwork that they will need to work on while you run your groups. Reading groups take up a large portion of your teaching morning and may need to be broken up into two separate times of the day. Remember that you cannot expect young students to sit at a desk for hours on end. A one-hour allotment for reading groups is plenty. If you have four reading groups and the groups tend to run twenty to twenty-five minutes, allowing for transition while groups trade, the class will be sitting for approximately two hours. If you break reading into two sessions, then only half of your class will be sitting for an hour. This hour can then be broken up by allowing children to participate in peer tutoring when their work is completed. For children who have finished seatwork, another option might be to have independent work stations with play activities. Do not be tempted to give more work to children who finish early. This will only serve to punish a child for getting his/her work done quickly. Instead, the child should be rewarded by getting to participate in other activities.

The afternoon is generally dedicated to other, less intensive, learning activities. The afternoon schedule will tend to change from day to day, with differing activities such as physical education, music, library, and so forth. Subjects such as science, health, and social studies are usually not taught every day; thus, these will rotate as well. The afternoon is a good time for interactive teaching; science experiments and health projects can be educational and entertaining. As the students' attention span and energy level wane, these fun activities can keep them involved. The end of the day can be used for art projects (e.g., making valentines, pumpkins, or shamrocks); finishing seatwork; and cashing in on reinforcers. The schedule presented in Figure 3–3 is an example of how to rotate activities, how to involve students in a variety of learning situations, and how to use their energy level to work for you.

Figure 3-3
Example of a Daily Schedule

Subjects taught:

Daily: Spelling, math, reading
Less than daily: Science, health, social studies
Nonacademic activities: Physical education, library, music, art

Reading groups: Four groups, twenty-five minutes each

Time	*Activity*	*Type of Learning Situation*
8:30	School begins	
8:30-8:50	Openings	Group activity—structured and unstructured
8:50-9:15	Group teaching: Spelling or math	Group activity—structured
9:15-10:15	Reading groups: 9:15-9:45 (Group A) 9:45-10:15 (Group B)	Small-group activity—structured
	Seatwork	Independent—structured
	Peer tutoring/work stations	Independent—unstructured
10:15-10:30	Recess	
10:30-11:00	Group Teaching: Spelling or math	Group activity—structured
11:00-12:00	Reading groups: 11:00-11:30 (Group C) 11:30-12:00 (Group D)	Small group—structured
	Seatwork	Independent—structured
	Peer tutoring/work stations	Independent—unstructured
12:00-12:10	Cleaning up: Bathroom, hand in papers, line up	
12:10-12:50	Lunch and recess	
12:50-1:05	Story time	Group activity—unstructured
1:05-1:30	Group lesson: Science Health Social studies	Group and/or small-group activity—structured and/or unstructured
1:30-2:00	Nonacademic activity: Physical education Library Music	Group activity—unstructured
2:00-2:30	Activity period Art work Finish seatwork	Group, small group and/or independent—structured or unstructured
2:30-2:45	Get ready to go home: Clean up class Turn in papers Fill in public posting Cash in reinforcers Pass out notes to go home	
2:45	End of school day	

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Chapter 4

AFFECTING ANTECEDENTS: RULES AND ROUTINES

We discussed antecedents in the A–B–C analysis of behavior (Chapter 1). You may recall that antecedents are *anything* that happens before a behavior occurs. They can serve as a discriminator for behavior. When we hear the five o'clock whistle, we know it is time to go home. When we see our children rub their eyes, it is time for them to go to sleep. Antecedents can govern our behavior or set the occasion for a behavior to occur. By manipulating antecedents, we can set the occasion for a specified desirable behavior to occur. The techniques we have discussed to this point affect antecedents. For example, the desk arrangement affects how children pay attention; in fact, we can manipulate on-task behaviors by changing the desk arrangement. With the scheduling concerns, we again are trying to set the occasion for positive behaviors. It is important to consider antecedents when developing an effective classroom management system. In a recent review of the effect of antecedents on behavior, one reviewer suggested antecedents "may exert just as powerful control over human behavior in developmental and educational contexts as do contingencies of reinforcement" (1, p. 215).

When we are trying to affect antecedents, we must spend some time thinking about the behaviors that we either want to avoid or want to elicit through our manipulations. When we are manipulating the classroom environment, we spend time anticipating problem areas in the room and then arranging the class to avoid the problem. When we discussed the reasons children misbehave, you may remember that one reason is that they do not have a necessary skill. They often do not know how to perform the appropriate behavior because they have not learned it. When we discuss antecedents, one of the important aspects is to teach the desired behavior. We can easily develop strategies to teach new behaviors to replace old behaviors, or to teach new skills that we want to elicit in class.

To develop a strategy using antecedents, write down the behavior that you wish to occur. In general, we can divide behaviors into those that we want to increase or maintain, and those that we wish to decrease or eliminate. By using antecedents, we can use a more positive approach to develop new behaviors. After we determine the desired behavior, we then must determine whether the child already has the ability to perform the behavior or whether he/she does not possess the skill. If the child does not possess the skill, then you will need to develop a teaching strategy to teach the desired skill. An example of this is teaching classroom routines. Children coming into your class for the first time have a skill deficit in knowing how to follow your classroom routines; thus, you must teach them. The same is true for your classroom rules. You must teach them what quiet is, teach them what sitting in their seats means, and teach them what to do when they want to ask a question. Children may have more pronounced skill deficits in areas such as social skills, including making friends, being polite, sharing, and helping others. If you have a school counselor, social worker, or school psychologist, they might be able to teach classroom units in these areas. Otherwise, you might need to teach these skills yourself. There are several good training packages available for social skills, a few of which are listed in the resources at the end of this chapter.

If you find that the children *do* know *how* to perform a skill, but do not perform it on a regular basis, then you need to manipulate the antecedents to elicit the behavior. Remember that an antecedent can be a person, place, time, event, object, or another behavior. Let's look at how we can use these different antecedents for our behavior management.

CATEGORIES OF ANTECEDENTS

Person

A person who serves as an effective antecedent for good behavior is usually the principal. Children often will behave appropriately when the principal comes to class. Visitors also often serve as antecedents to good behavior. This is particularly true if you have asked a professional to come to observe one of your difficult students! Just as the car never makes the strange noise when you bring it to the mechanic, your troublesome student will often behave like an angel once the school psychologist comes to observe! When we are training our students to recognize a person as an antecedent to good behavior, we also want to include ourselves. Since the teacher is in the class at all times and children cannot be expected to be on their best behavior at all times, we need to discriminate for the students when we mean business and when we do not. Nonverbal signals are one way to add this discrimination. The students see your hand raised; this signals them to quiet down and behave. You also might have a "look" the children recognize as the one that means "shape up!" However, remember that your discriminators will be more effective if you train your students to them. You may even let them know that when you fold your arms and have a stern look on your face, this means that they are too noisy.

Place

Places that become antecedents for good behavior are places such as the library or media center, the halls, the lunchroom, and any other public place where children are expected to behave in a certain way. Training is the most appropriate procedure here. You must outline the specific rules for behaving appropriately in specific places. You also can give children the freedom to have places where they can be wild, run around, and be more carefree. If children can learn to discriminate different behaviors for different places, it will be a benefit to managing your class—particularly on outings.

Time

Generally, we are all somewhat programmed by certain times of the day. We feel hungry at noon, and we are ready to go home at 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. Children fall into these schedules as well. They learn to anticipate events by following a general time schedule, even when they cannot tell time. Young children can tell you their daily schedule, reciting activity by activity, although they have no idea of the exact time things happen. To effectively use time as an antecedent means to have a schedule and to follow that schedule as closely as possible. When children have the predictability of their schedule, then they feel more secure and settled. When a teacher constantly changes schedules, then the children cannot predict their activities; they do not know what comes next. Children need the routine and predictability to help maintain their positive behaviors.

Event

Events can serve as antecedents, for example, a party that sets up behaviors to be less restrained or a test that serves to cause anxiety in many students. Typically, we use an event to avoid misbehaviors, for example, when a holiday is approaching. We know that children will have difficulty concentrating around holidays such as Christmas and Halloween; thus, we avoid the situation by engaging in tasks that require less structure. We do not need to totally avoid academics; rather, we should think of fun, yet educational, projects to help keep our students occupied.

Object

Objects can take on antecedent control if they are paired with the appropriate behaviors. For example, when the teacher has the reinforcer bean jar in front of the class, it signals to students that it is a time when they can earn beans as reinforcement for being quiet. Different colored flags can serve as discriminators for students to know that it is a quiet work time (red flag), a light talking time (yellow flag), or a time to move about the room (a green flag). In one school, a monitor was used to determine noise levels at lunch. When the noise level went above a specified level, then a buzzer went off that continued until the noise level dropped. The monitor became a discriminator for the students to remain quiet. Objects can serve as effective antecedents if students are trained to recognize the discriminator and if the object is used selectively—not all the time (then it loses its discriminating quality).

Behaviors

Behaviors can serve as antecedents as well. For example, when children appear to be restless and are having difficulty concentrating, then a series of relaxation exercises can serve as an antecedent to a more calm behavior. This type of exercise could be something simple such as stretching, for example, having students stand and reach for the ceiling and touch the floor while they take deep breaths. More formal relaxation programs that involve total body relaxation through tightening and releasing the muscles also are appropriate. The relaxation then serves as an antecedent to more calm behavior.

SETTING UP CLASSROOM RULES AND ROUTINES

One way to affect antecedents is through the use of classroom rules and routines. Every classroom has rules for the way things should be done, whether or not they are written. Children pick up many of the unwritten rules by observing, testing, or listening to previous students. "Never tell Mrs. Smith you *can't* do it; she'll say 'can't' is a word she doesn't know!" "It's okay to eat in Mr. Johnson's class, he never says anything." Unwritten rules obviously cause confusion and are ambiguous since not everyone may know them. Pity the new child who learns the hard way that Miss Crampton insists on using the word "please" in her class. Written rules are not automatically a solution to behavior management either. Too many rules or rules that are not clearly defined can be just as ineffective and confusing as unwritten rules. Once rules become well-established, they become habitual or routine. Routines include established, habitual rules but are also guidelines for appropriate procedures in class such as lining up at the door or going to the restroom. Routines also are important to help make classrooms run more smoothly. Again, it is important that students are clearly told what the routines will be, rather than having them piece together those expectations over the first months of class. The effective use of classroom rules includes setting up the appropriate number of rules, including student input in making rules, stating the rules positively, and then practicing the rules and routines.

GETTING READY FOR RULES

In the early grades of elementary school it is important to remember that children do not come to kindergarten knowing how to be students. The task demands of the students change over the first few years; thus, children must learn each year how to behave in class and what the expectations are for being a student. In these early years, it is important to keep in mind that the teacher's role is to instruct rather than to discipline the child for not behaving like a student. Before children start in your class, you should review what your expectations are for them and remember that those "angels" you had so well-trained at the end of last year are being replaced by children who are younger and who have not yet learned how to behave in your class. Your rules and expectations may change throughout the year as these children become more mature and socialized into the role of a student. For example, initially you might expect children to complete only short assignments that take ten minutes, while by the end of the year they can complete longer assignments. Their ability to complete independent seatwork might change as well.

They will become more independent and will be able to follow your instructions more readily.

Aside from concrete rules in class, there are routines that must be learned. Unlike rules, routines are expectations that you might have for how things should run in the class. Rather than posting routines, they are practiced to ensure that students know the procedures that make the classroom run smoothly. Examples of procedures include how to turn in assignments, how to line up for lunch, and what to do when you need the teacher's help. Since your scheduling has been determined, you can look at the day and decide which routines would make the class run more smoothly. Getting ready for classroom routines means examining which routines will enhance the traffic flow in the class, which routines will improve on your scheduling of daily events, and which will decrease classroom disruptions. Habitual rules also become incorporated into routines.

WRITING RULES FOR THE CLASS

Rules should be stated clearly and definitively, just as we discussed defining behaviors for behavior-management purposes. It is helpful to be as concrete as possible, especially when we are writing rules for young children. For example, a classroom rule might be, "Be helpful to others." However, if your six-year-old students do not know what is meant by the word "helpful," the rule is not going to be effective. Instead, we have to define the behavior we want, just as we discussed defining behaviors in the Introduction. By the time children reach the older grades, they will know these more ambiguous words; however, younger children need to be told exactly what the behavior means.

When making up classroom rules, it is helpful to examine the classroom needs. The basic needs that must be met are that children have to listen to the teacher and obey commands, that children do not hurt others or disturb others' property, and that children spend time learning. Your classroom rules should reflect these basic needs. Other behaviors often can be covered in your classroom procedures and expectations. For example, appropriate seat behavior can be covered in expectations. You can review with your class what is expected when they sit at their desks; for example, students should be seated, they should not talk out loud, and they should raise their hand when they need help. The reason we need to make these procedures and not rules, is tbat if we made a rule for all of our expectations, we would have hundreds of rules! It is generally believed that somewhere between three and eight rules are enough. If there are more than eight rules, children will forget them. It is helpful to begin with fewer rules, for example, three or four, and then add rules as problems arise. Giving yourself leeway will prove to be a benefit as the year progresses and as you learn the unique needs of your own class.

When you are making rules for your class, it is often helpful to have student input. In this way, the children will be actively involved in making their own rules rather than having someone else's rules told to them. This also will allow you to come to a group understanding of what the rules mean. If the children have helped you to choose the rules, then you can have a group discussion of what is meant by the rules. With your leadership, it will not be difficult for the discussion to end with the rules that you would have chosen anyway. Begin the rule-setting process before your group discussion. Make a list of the needs for your class and which rules would address those needs. Listed below are areas of need that typically are the basis for many rules:

1. *Safety:* Children should feel safe from physical harm from others. Their property should be safe from harm as well.

2. *Compliance:* Children should follow classroom rules, procedures, and teachers' directions.

3. *Maintaining a learning environment:* The classroom should be a place where learning can occur. Factors

that contribute to a learning environment include noise level, keeping materials where they belong, keeping the students' physical space (i.e., desks) in order, and following procedures in class.

4. *Achievement:* Children should achieve in academics and in emotional/social areas.

After you have established your classroom needs, jot down a list of rules that would meet those needs. It is imperative that the rules are clearly defined using concrete terms that your young students will understand. It is not uncommon to determine classroom rules such as, "Be polite to others"; "Always be courteous"; and "Respect your neighbor's property." Students will have difficulty with these rules. If we define the rules, then we can help the children understand whether they are following them. We can word them in the same way but add descriptors such as, "Be polite to others: Say 'thank you' and 'please.' " Especially with the young students, you must make the rules clear.

One last key to making rules is to state them positively. In terms of our behavior-management hierarchy, it is important to remember that we are trying to control behavior positively by dealing with the parameters of behavior before misbehavior occurs. When we state negative rules such as "no hitting, no talking, no running," we are setting up the children for a negative environment. Students are left with suppressing behaviors rather than learning new behaviors. Remember that your role should be teacher, not disciplinarian. By establishing positive rules, practicing the rules, and providing incentives to use the positive behaviors, you can cut down on your disciplinarian role. We can word almost any rule positively, although it is easier to make negative rules. Ask teachers what rules they need to control their class; most of the rules will be worded negatively. For every negative behavior, we can take the opportunity to teach a positive behavior. Figure 4–1 outlines the positive side of negative rules.

Figure 4-1
Making Positive Rules

Negative	*Positive*
No running in the classroom.	Walk in the classroom.
No talking during seatwork.	Keep a quiet mouth during seatwork.
No fighting.	Keep hands and feet to yourselves.
No swearing.	Keep a clean mouth and say what you really mean.
No talking when someone else is talking.	One person talks at a time.
No cheating.	Do your own work.
No stealing.	Respect other's property.

When you begin your class discussion of rules, ask the children what they think are important needs for the classroom. Prompt them with ideas, if needed, such as: "Do you think we should be nice to each other?" "Do you think we should do our own work?" Make a list of those needs on the board and have the children think of rules to go with those needs. For example, children might agree that they should be friendly to each other. Ask the children to suggest ideas about what "friendly" means, and how you can make a rule to go with being friendly. Children may respond with ideas such as sharing with others, saying nice things to each other, inviting others to play, and being polite. You may have an overall rule with the subparts that define the rule such as be friendly, share with others, say nice things to others, and invite others to play. You might want to work on just one rule a day for the first week of school. Children may get tired after brainstorming one idea. When you have finished one rule, post it where the class can see it. The rule also can be built into a positive social-skills training activity where children can earn reinforcers for exhibiting the prosocial behavior. For example, you might make a game of "Be Friendly to Your Neighbor Week." Children can keep track of the number of times they exhibit each behavior. In this manner, you are once again being a teacher rather than a disciplinarian.

PRACTICING ROUTINES

There are many daily routines that will be established in your classroom that will make behavior management easier. The routines are procedures that are similar to rules but are less rigid in the sense that there might not be consequences for breaking the procedure. Classroom routines include coming into the classroom in the morning, handing in work papers, getting the teacher's attention, going to the bathroom, and lining up for lunch. If you can plan in advance some of the routines that you would like to establish and write them down, you will be ahead of the game. We must always remember that young children do not come to school knowing how to be students, and that they must be taught everything. Older children may know what "get ready for lunch" or "line up at the door" means, but the little children do not know what is expected of them. We must teach them and then practice those routines with them.

The way to teach classroom routines is to define for the students all of the behavior components involved in the routine or procedure. You are letting the students know your expectations for that routine. Let's use the command "everyone line up at the door" as an example. If that command were given the first day of kindergarten, there would be general bedlam with children not knowing which door is meant, children pushing to be first, children yelling, and maybe even children crying as they are shoved. To teach "line up at the door," we begin with explaining which door we mean and when this command might be given. We then outline the behaviors such as:

Teacher: Line up at the door is something that I might ask you to do when? (Ask the class)
Responses: Library, recess, lunch, time to go home, assemblies.

Teacher: When we line up at the door, there are certain behaviors that make it easier for everyone to get there safer and more quickly and orderly. Can anyone tell me what those behaviors might be?
Responses: Walking, not pushing, quietly, one at a time.

Teacher: Those are all good ideas. We are going to pick some important behaviors that our class will follow when we line up. The first thing is that we will all walk to the door. The line leader gets to be first, so running will not get you there first for any reason. Second, we will keep hands folded so we are ready to walk down the halls with our arms folded. And we will keep our mouths quiet. Who can show me how to line up? (Children take turns lining up at the door exhibiting the correct behaviors).

Teacher: Everyone did a great job. Now, let's remember. When I say line up at the door, we will walk, keep arms folded, and keep a quiet mouth. Let's practice all together. Ready? Everyone line up at the door.

This teaching example was built on a discussion around the behaviors that make lining up easier. The children help to decide the procedure and thus can better understand what is needed for lining up. Children will be more invested if they help to decide rather than if they just are told what to do. It is helpful to practice all routines and review them as necessary. Students should be given corrective feedback in concrete terms such as "That's not walking," rather than, "You were terrible lining up." It also is important to praise them for completing procedures and to again give feedback in concrete terms: "Everyone did a great job turning in your papers today. You were quiet, you put them in the right basket, and you kept hands to yourself."

MAINTENANCE AND COMPLIANCE TO RULES AND ROUTINES

While initially working on establishing rules and routines in the classroom, usually we are aware of reminding students to follow the rules or of reinforcing compliance. However, once rules are established, we might forget about ongoing reinforcement of these rules. In order to maintain classroom rules and routines, it is important to remind pupils of what a good job they are doing following these rules and routines. Intermittent praise and reinforcement will increase the longevity of compliance to rules. A surprise party or special activity for "being good" and complying to rules can be an effective strategy for maintenance. Remember also that consistency among classroom personnel is the key. If a rule is a rule, it should be *a rule* for everyone all the time. If the teacher decides to skip the rule for today, the children will learn that it is okay for them to forget the rules on occasion as well.

OTHER TECHNIQUES USING ANTECEDENTS

Shaping

Most skills are taught through successive approximations to the final target response. Children or adults rarely perform a new skill perfectly the first time. Shaping involves the reinforcement of the small steps or the approximations of the final response. By reinforcing the small steps, we eventually reach our terminal objective. This is the process by which we learn to talk. Babies begin making babbling sounds, which we reinforce by either babbling or talking back. Slowly sounds begin to form and we repeat back the sounds such as "ba–ba–ba." Eventually, the toddler approximates words until, as a young child, he or she can talk. We can use the same principles in the classroom. We can shape students' behaviors by reinforcing the approximations to our terminal objective. For example, when we teach handraising, the terminal objective is for the child to quietly raise his/her hand when the teacher is needed. The child initially yells out. We teach handraising as a skill to obtain the teacher's attention. The child's first response likely is to yell, then raise a hand, perhaps while still yelling. We reinforce the hand raise, then add a new skill, raise the hand before yelling. Once this is mastered, we move to raise the hand without yelling. We successfully shape the behavior. In shaping, we are usually starting with a behavior that is already in the child's repertoire. Shaping is helpful when we have a child who we find to be difficult to reinforce. The child exhibits few behaviors that we find appropriate. However, through reinforcement of approximations, we reinforce the appropriate behaviors while ignoring the misbehaviors. For example, we want a child to sit in his/her seat during seatwork. Every time we see the child sitting, we say "nice sitting." The child might sit only for a few seconds and then is up again, but he/she is learning that sitting is the appropriate behavior. As we continue to reinforce these "small steps," eventually the child sits for increasing lengths of time. We shape the response we want by these successive approximations.

Modeling

The teacher or other children can serve as models of appropriate behavior for a child who does not perform a skill appropriately or who does not have the skill. In modeling, learning takes place through observation. By seeing others perform a skill as well as by seeing the consequences of the behavior, a child can learn a new skill. The teacher can present models by pointing out the appropriate behaviors: "I like the way that Sammy is sitting. He has his feet on the floor, his bottom on the seat, and his hands are on the table." The other children look at Sammy, see the model, and can then imitate this behavior. A distinction should be made between learning the appropriate response and actually performing it. While a child might "learn" the appropriate behavior, additional incentives may sometimes be necessary before the child performs the skill. In modeling, we assume that learning is taking place by the observation of an appropriate model. By pairing modeling with reinforcement, we can effectively teach new behaviors.

Prompting

To help initiate a response we can use a verbal prompt or cue. The prompt can be complex verbal instructions that tell the students what to do. For example, when we are teaching students what "get ready for lunch" means, we might initially give lengthy instructions. We might say, "Get ready for lunch, put your books away, wash your hands, and then line up at the door." Eventually we can fade our verbal instructions to a shorter and shorter set of instructions until the cue "get ready for lunch" elicits the desired response. At the beginning of the school year we are likely to use more verbal prompts and more complex directions as children attempt to learn our rules and routines in the classroom. By the end of the year, the sound of a bell may be the only cue needed to "get ready for lunch."

Nonverbal Signals

As a teacher, you know how tiring it is to talk for the entire school day. You get tired of asking children to be quiet, to listen to your announcement, to be attentive, and so forth. Nonverbal signals can be as effective as verbal prompts and can save your voice as well as your sanity. Nonverbal signals are signals or signs that require no verbal communication that you can give to your class that you have trained to elicit a certain response. We have all been trained in nonverbal signals. For example, when our parents wanted us to be quiet, they raised their index fingers to their lips. When we were coming close to a spanking for our misbehavior, we got a finger waved at us. In the classroom, we can develop signals as well. An arm raised by the teacher may mean that everyone is to be quiet and look at the teacher. The "index finger to the lips" can signal to be quiet. However, the children must be trained to understand the signals and the consequences for not following the signals must be clearly outlined. The standard index finger to the lips is used so frequently that it loses its message unless you train your students what it means in your class. For example, you may raise your finger to your lips and then start a countdown with your other fingers. Your students may have learned that if you get to five before they are quiet, then they lose a privilege that afternoon. Perhaps they miss two minutes of recess for every countdown to five you reach. Other teachers have made games out of being quiet. For example, the teacher begins a quiet "follow the leader": "If you can hear me, touch your nose; if you can hear me, touch your hair; if you can hear me, touch your elbow. . . ." As the class quiets, more and more children will participate. When they are quiet, you can make your announcement. These nonverbal signals save your voice, save your sanity, and they teach children to look for nonverbal communication signs to alter their behavior.

Precision Requests

Using antecedents and planning ahead for behavior problems are the essence of proactive behavior management. As you can see, we can manipulate antecedents to avoid many behavior problems. We also can use antecedents in our requests to students. We often can avoid behavior problems by using a planned sequence of commands, which also have planned consequences, to increase compliance to that command. Called "precision commands" or "requests" (2), these requests involve several key rules for improving compliance and can make a difference in the attitude your students have to your commands. One of the key components of precision requests is that they are just that, requests. We ask the children to do something and then add a "please." Adding the "please" seems to allow the children to comply because you are asking them to do something rather than commanding it. Also, when social skills are becoming more important in getting ahead in our society, using "please" serves as a model to our students. The request, then, sounds like this: "Johnny, come here, please"; or "Sally, come to my desk, please." When this request is made, it is important to try to establish eye contact with the student and to use a firm voice. A close proximity also helps to improve compliance, but may not always be possible in the classroom setting. Once the request is made, it is important to wait three to five seconds for compliance and then to follow-through with the request. In the classroom, two scenarios often happen: (a) either the teacher immediately issues another request, "Johnny, hurry up, I said to come here," or (b) the teacher gets distracted and forgets that the request was made. Then the students never learn that compliance is expected. This inconsistency on the part of the teacher may lead to a decrease in compliance as students take their chances on whether any consequence will occur from not following through. If the child complies with the first request, then he/she is reinforced and is told why he/she is getting the reinforcer: "Nice coming, Johnny, I liked the way you came promptly"; or "Thank you for coming to my desk, Sally. You listened well to my directions."

If the child does not respond in three to five seconds, then the command is reissued; however, this time the child is told that he/she "needs" to do the request. This added emphasis helps the child to realize that you are going to follow-through with the request, and it also serves as a discriminator for a consequence to follow if he/she does not comply. The request becomes: "Johnny, you need to come here"; or "Sally, you need to come to my desk."

If the child complies, then we again reinforce him/her with a social reinforcer for performing the request. If the child does not comply, we add a consequence. Consequences will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 5; however, at this point it is important to note that consequences that do not take a lot of time are most appropriate because requests are made frequently and the teacher cannot take a lot of time to perform elaborate consequences. For example, a mild aversive such as losing a point in the classroom management system might be appropriate.

What is important is that the consequence is preplanned so that both the teacher and students know what will happen. In times when the student is getting us angry and pushing our buttons, we can have that planned consequence to fall back on. If you can manage a calm voice (even though you may be boiling inside!), you will be able to be more effective and will not give the student the reinforcement of seeing you "lose it." Although precision requests seem awkward at first, as you use them they will become more natural and automatic, making your job a lot easier. You can directly affect your students' behavior by using predictable and preplanned requests and consequences. Antecedents are the key in making a positive classroom environment.

CASE STUDY

Mrs. McMillan greeted her first grade class the first day of school and realized that she had forgotten how small six-year-olds are. She knew that she had to get the classroom rules and procedures down the first week so that things would run more smoothly in the classroom. During a group discussion, she talked about rules and asked the students how they thought rules are helpful. Children responded that rules could be for safety, such as looking both ways before crossing the street. Mrs. McMillan listed "safety" on the board. The children then offered that rules could help you make friends, such as not grabbing toys and saying nice things to others. Mrs. McMillan added "being friendly" on the board. One child mentioned that rules help you know where to go and what to do. He said that his mother had been in a car accident because the other driver had not followed the rules. Mrs. McMillan wrote "appropriate behavior." She then focused on one area each day. She wrote the word "safety" and led a discussion about the importance of feeling safe at school. She asked the children what would make them feel safe at school. Replies included, "If nobody hits me"; "If I can tell on somebody that hurt me"; and "If my things don't get stolen." Mrs. McMillan offered, "If we made a rule that said 'everyone' keeps hands and feet to themselves, would that make school a safe place?" The children agreed and, therefore, she had rule number one.

The next day she wrote "being friendly" on the board. She asked the children what being friendly meant. Children said sharing, being nice, saying nice things to each other, helping each other with schoolwork, and giving candy to friends. Mrs. McMillan decided to choose more than one item for this general rule of being friendly; thus, she could use this rule for teaching social skills. Under the general rule of "being friendly," she listed the following: (a) share with others, (b) help others when they need it, and (c) give compliments to others.

Finally, on the third day, Mrs. McMillan wrote "appropriate behavior" on the board. She asked what the children thought appropriate behavior in the class meant. They responded "no running," "no yelling," "no cheating," "no goofing off," and "no hitting." Mrs. McMillan pointed out that they had all thought of things you should not do in class. What were things you could do? This was harder for the class. After much thinking, a few ideas were mentioned: (a) "Sit quietly at your desk"; (b) "Do your own work"; and (c) "Use inside voices." She listed these under the general heading of appropriate behavior and decided that these three general rules were enough for now. She posted the rules where the class could see them and planned to review them daily for the first week and then intermittently thereafter.

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Chapter 5

REINFORCEMENT STRATEGIES

DEVELOPING A POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT SYSTEM

Types of Reinforcement

Positive reinforcers can increase achievement in class as well as decrease disruptive behaviors. A positive reinforcement system can involve many different systems of reinforcement. When we discuss positive reinforcers, remember that a positive reinforcer is defined as *anything* that increases or maintains the occurrence of a behavior. There are four general classes of reinforcers. They are listed here in order of the most basic, or the first reinforcers we learn, to the more complex. Social reinforcement takes learning for it to become a reinforcer, although it is the optimal reinforcer.

Edible Reinforcers

Food is one of the most basic reinforcers. It is the first reinforcer we learn as infants. Children and adults like to eat, and we can usually find some food that will be motivating for a person and that will be a reward. Some professionals have ethical problems using edible reinforcers in the classroom. They feel that when childhood obesity is on the rise and health problems related to "junk food" are increasing, we should find other rewards to use. However, one cannot argue about the highly reinforcing quality of edible reinforcers. We can use this reinforcer in combination with other reinforcers, for example, a party, to increase the rewarding value of the activity.

Material Reinforcers

Material reinforcers can include anything from pencils, stickers, and pictures to tokens that can be traded for other reinforcers. Children enjoy earning material goods for their activities, and this can offer a powerful motivator. Problems for teachers might arise with material reinforcers due to the costs involved; however, sometimes the school budget or the PTA will have the money to cover these kinds of materials. A token system can be less costly because material reinforcers can be handed out over longer periods of time or the tokens can be used to earn activities that do not cost anything.

Activity Reinforcers

Children can earn activities for good behavior. A creative teacher can use any fun activity such as playing board games, doing artwork, playing outside, or getting to be a class helper or line leader to reinforce children's behavior. The activity itself can be the reward, or children can earn points or tokens to trade for activity reinforcers. A caution with using activities as rewards is noted in that all activities should not become reinforcers since children who have difficulty earning these rewards may become discouraged because they never get to participate. Also, if a child never gets to play the board games, for example, they may not become reinforcing because he/she does not know that they are fun.

Social Reinforcers

A social reinforcer is a social gesture, verbal comment, or behavior that rewards or reinforces the child. This is the most important reinforcer because it will be generalized to adulthood, and, it is hoped, will continue to serve as a motivator throughout life. Examples of social reinforcers include a smile, a light touch on the arm or back, a positive comment such as "good job," or attention from the teacher. Social reinforcers are a key to any positive classroom and should be combined with all methods of reinforcement.

It is important for teachers to understand that providing rewards is *not* bribing. A bribe, according to *Merriam-Webster* (8), is "to corrupt or influence [one in a position of trust] by favors or gifts." There is a negative influence inferred from the notion of bribery. Positive reinforcement, on the other hand, rewards the student for appropriate behavior. A reward is "something given or offered for some service or attainment" (8). The positive reinforcer is a consequence of appropriate behavior rather than an enticement. It is important for teachers to realize that we all work for positive reinforcers. We work so that we can get paid, so that we can eat, and so that we can enjoy leisure activities. It is unfair to expect children to work for no reinforcement when we enjoy the fruits of our own labors.

When choosing reinforcers, it is important to remember that reinforcers differ from child to child. What is reinforcing to one child may be a punisher for another one. For example, teacher attention can be very rewarding for some students, while others try to avoid it. When implementing a classwide reinforcement system, it is important to have a variety of reinforcers available so that all students may find something they like. It also can be beneficial for students to help make up the classroom list of reinforcers. In this way you can be assured that the reinforcers are items that students will actually work for.

Delivering Reinforcers

The delivery of the reinforcer is as important as the reinforcer itself. For example, if you are given a watch for twenty years of service with the district, it will be more rewarding if it is given to you at a large banquet acknowledging your contribution to education rather than if it is left in your mailbox. We might bristle when someone tells us that we look nice, but they use a sour tone of voice. The same is true when we give reinforcers to our students. Following are several key factors involved in effectively giving reinforcers.

Immediacy

Feedback must be given immediately following the occurrence of the behavior. If a child follows directions, it is more effective to praise the child immediately following the behavior rather than to wait until another time. Social praise and tokens are easy methods for giving immediate feedback to students. You can easily note a student's behavior: "Betsy, nice working, give yourself a point." Correcting papers immediately, either by exchanging papers with peers or by having you grade the shorter assignments, will enable students to get feedback immediately; it also will cut down on your after-school grading. Children get immediate feedback in their learning if they are tested on the material frequently. After a day's lesson, children can get immediate feedback on the new material by taking a brief test and having their peers grade it.

Frequency

It is important to give feedback frequently to students. Some authors suggest that a child should receive a minimum of one reinforcer every fifteen minutes. It may be helpful to take a baseline on what your average rate of reinforcement is. Choose a one-hour block of time when you can count the number of positives you give to students. You can make a check on a paper or use a counter to determine your average rate of giving positives. If it is less than four an hour, you may need to do some work! Research has shown that during seatwork time, frequent and brief teacher contacts to students who are on-task can improve rates of on-task behavior (10).

Enthusiasm

When you deliver a reinforcer, it should be done in an enthusiastic manner. Sound like you really mean it! Young children especially enjoy an enthusiastic voice tone. You can add enthusiasm by having the entire class participate in cheering students' progress. At the end of the day, when the public posting is reviewed, you can have the entire class applaud for the general pool of students who have completed their goals. If you act excited, then your students will be excited too.

Eye Contact

Another important element of the delivery is to use eye contact when you deliver the reinforcer. Think about how you feel when a compliment is given to you but the person does not look at you. While eye contact preferences differ across cultures, our culture invites eye contact. Lack of eye contact is often viewed with mistrust, suspicion, and deceit. When we look someone in the eyes, it denotes sincerity and honesty. The child also feels that the reinforcer was truly meant for him/her. When you give a classwide compliment, glance around the room and try to establish eye contact with as many students as possible.

Describe the Behavior

When you deliver a reinforcer, it is important to let the student know exactly what he/she is being reinforced for. *Describe exactly* what the student did that earned him/her the reinforcer. For example, "Good working," becomes, "Good working, everyone is keeping quiet and working on their own assignments." "Nice job," becomes, "Nice job, you wrote neatly and finished all of the sentences." Research has shown that giving specific praise for a student's behavior and describing the particular behavior are more potent in maintaining accuracy than general praise (2).

Variety

Use a variety of reinforcers. If you give the children the same reinforcers day after day, they lose their value as the students satiate on the reinforcer. Even a very highly valued reinforcer can lose its significance if it is given all the time. We can vary reinforcers by using a reinforcement menu or by using innovative techniques such as spinners and mystery motivators (discussed later).

Close Proximity

Close proximity can increase the value of a social reinforcer. It is more meaningful when you tell students that they are performing well if you are at their desks rather than across the room. Pairing the social reinforcer with a light touch can increase the strength of the reinforcement as well. An effective method of delivering reinforcers is to walk through your classroom from time to time and to praise students directly.

Personalize the Reward

You can personalize the reinforcer by using the student's name when you deliver the praise. This also can facilitate eye contact since most children will look when their name is called. Personalizing the reinforcer in a classroom system can include having children decorate their own point cards or write their own name on a public posting card. If the child feels that the reinforcer is meant for him/her specifically, it will increase the value of the reinforcer.

Remembering all of these factors may seem overwhelming at first; but with practice and use, they become more natural and sincere. Put together, the scenario may resemble the following:

> Jeremy approaches Mrs. Johnson's desk with his handwriting assignment completed. He hands in his assignment, and Mrs. Johnson reviews the work saying, "Jeremy, let's see how you did today on your handwriting. Look at what good work you did today! You remembered to cross all of your 't's' and you put a period at the end of every sentence!" She then looks him in the eyes, places a hand on his arm, and says, "I'm proud of your work today, Jeremy. You can give yourself a star."

INDIVIDUAL REWARD STRATEGIES

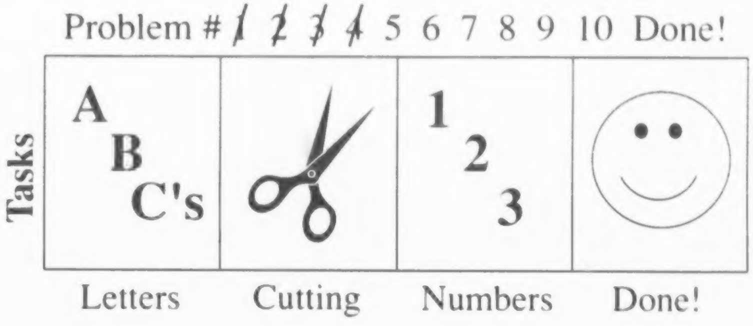
One method of setting up a reward system in the classroom is to have each child receive reinforcers for his/her work and to have an individual goal or tally sheet. There are several different ways to set up an individual system.

Self-Control/Self-Reinforcement

Children can give themselves a reinforcer for appropriate behavior, with contingencies for appropriate behavior either self-determined or determined by an external source such as the teacher. In one study with an eight-year-old boy, self-assessment of on-task behavior resulted in higher rates of on-task performance than when the teacher assessed on-task (3). Teaching children to monitor their own behavior can have long-lasting effects as they learn to take control of their own behaviors. Children as young as kindergarteners can learn to set goals and be rewarded for achieving their goals. The younger the child and the lower he/she is cognitively, the more concrete and the more simple the self-monitoring program should be. The simplest system used to develop a self-monitoring checklist is one that students check off as they complete each assignment. A square grid can be used for younger children; for nonreaders, symbols can replace words. Figure 5--1 gives an example of such a check-off system.

Children also can set goals to finish a certain number of problems each day. As the child works, he/she can cross off another problem being completed. A simple number line taped on a child's desk can serve as a monitoring device. The child can

Figure 5-1
Self-Monitoring System for Goal Setting



then reinforce himself/herself to complete each problem:

Goal: To finish ten problems today.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Done!!

Self-reinforcement also can be used to control behavior problems. Children can have set behaviors that they are working on such as "staying in seat" or "keeping hands to self." Following a work period, the teacher can remind students to check their behavior goals and to give themselves a check if they reached their goal. A spot-check by teachers will increase the reliability of the students' self-monitoring.

With any self-monitoring program, goals that are achieved can be tied into a larger reinforcement system since the mere checking-off of goals will lose its power of reinforcement after a period of time (remember variety?). Children who achieve their goals for the day can post their achievement on a public-posting system or can exchange goal sheets for activity or material reinforcers. A self-monitoring system allows for direct feedback following completion of the goal and also can help maintain a higher level reinforcement program through delaying the more time-consuming reinforcers. To set up a self-monitoring system, the following is suggested:

1. Discuss the self-monitoring system with the child. Have the child help by choosing goals or behaviors to work on. Then define the goal in concrete terms so that both you and the child understand the goal.
2. Determine the method of recording. A checklist on the child's desk is an easy method. Laminating daily goal sheets can help with keeping the system both easy and readily available; thus, you will not have to run off new goal sheets each week.
3. Determine the frequency of the monitoring. Deciding the frequency of the monitoring will partially depend on the goal. Remember that the more

immediate the feedback, the better; thus, for work completion, checking-off as soon as the work is done is best. For behaviors, time intervals are more appropriate. Natural breaks in the day can work as times for the child to self-monitor his/her behavior. For example, behavior can be assessed at first recess, lunch, second recess, and before going home. The child will need to be reminded to check his/her behavior that again can be matched to the teacher's observations. For a child with more severe behavior problems, the teacher may have to time shorter intervals, such as every ten to fifteen minutes.

4. Transfer daily data to a more permanent record such as a public posting system or a check in your roster book. In this way you can monitor a child's progress over time and determine whether changes need to be made in the self-monitoring program.
5. Determine whether stronger reinforcers are needed. If the child seems to work for a while on the self-monitoring system and then seems to lose interest, it may be that stronger reinforcers are needed. Tying into another reinforcement system may strengthen the self-monitoring system.

Individual Contracting

Sometimes it might be necessary to contract with a child on an individual basis to improve work completion or behaviors. In contracting, the teacher negotiates with the pupil on goals and then monitors the data to determine whether the child has achieved his/her goals. Contracting can be the first step to using a self-monitoring system as described above. Research has found that contracting is effective in increasing students' productivity (6). Some research even suggests that students attain more of their goals when they choose their own goals (4).

When setting up a contract, the teacher and child agree on a goal and on the reward for achieving that goal. The frequency of monitoring the goal can be variable as it was in self-monitoring; however, immediate feedback is often not possible since the teacher is the monitor. Often contracts are checked at intermittent times during the day or at the end of the day. During the closing activities, children can have their contracts checked and reinforcers dispersed. To set up a contract, the following is suggested:

1. The teacher and student decide on a goal and a reward for achieving the goal.
2. A monitoring system is devised. A paper-and-pencil checklist, similar to that used in self-monitoring, can be used. The child can keep the contract or the student can bring it to the teacher for the information to be recorded.
3. Frequency of data collection is determined.
4. The schedule for dispensing reinforcers is determined. For example, does the child receive a reward daily or at the end of the week? Is the reward contingent on perfect completion or partial completion? The teacher and the student can negotiate the terms of the reinforcement.
5. Adding a consequence for not meeting the contract can add to the strength of the contract. The teacher and the student can negotiate a consequence.
6. Adding a bonus for work completed above the contract standards can add additional motivation.
7. Information from the contract is transferred to a more permanent system for monitoring long-term gains.

Sample contracts are presented in Figure 5–2.

Token Economies

In a token economy system, students can receive tokens

Figure 5-2
Sample Contracts

Contract for: Dan Jones

Goals: 1. I will complete at least ten out of fifteen math problems daily.
2. I will finish handwriting assignments accurately and on time.

Reward: Five minutes free play with game of choice.

Bonus: Goal 1. If more than ten problems are completed, I get one extra minute for each problem over ten completed.
Goal 2. If I finish handwriting assignment before time is completed and the work is neat and accurate, I can color until the rest of the class is done.

Day of the week:	M	T	W	TH	F
Goal 1	10	10	11	10	12
Goal 2	No	Yes	Yes	Bonus	Yes

Contract for: Sarah Hillman

Goal: I will keep my hands to myself when in line at lunch daily.

Reward: Can sit with best friend Marsha at lunch.

Consequence: If I do not keep my hands to myself, I need to sit by myself.

Day of the week:	M	T	W	TH	F
9/16-9/20	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
9/23-9/27	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

for reinforcers and then turn in the tokens for more tangible reinforcers such as activities or material reinforcers. Token economies are useful because the reinforcement can be given immediately and then more potent reinforcers can be administered later. They have been shown to be successful in increasing on-task performance for even the most distractible children, including hyperactive children (1, 9). Tokens can be actual chips, or beads, or checks on a paper. Either the teacher or the child can keep track of the tokens. A large bead abacus can be used for dispensing reinforcers, especially during small-group activities. Names can be placed along the rows of beads, and as each child earns a token, the bead is slid over to denote that the child has earned a reinforcer. At the end of the group, the child can transfer the points earned over to a tally sheet. The child also can have a tally sheet on his/her desk, and the teacher can make checks on it for reinforcers. In a token economy, it is important to have effective back-up reinforcers that will appeal to all children in the class. To set up a token economy, the following is suggested:

1. Set goals or determine behaviors that are the target for the token economy system. The goals can be academic or behavioral.
2. Determine what will be used for tokens. They should be easy to dispense, since feedback should be immediate, and should be difficult to copy or counterfeit.
3. Determine back-up reinforcers. This will require determining the number of tokens needed for each reinforcer as well as the reinforcers themselves.
4. Determine when tokens will be exchanged, e.g., hourly, daily, or weekly, and how they will be exchanged.
5. Remember to include variety in the system, i.e., changing reinforcers and keeping the system motivating for the students.

GROUP REWARD STRATEGIES

Group reward strategies or group contingencies is a reward structure that reinforces behavior or achievement based on the performance of the group as a whole. The individuals in the group are responsible for the reward (or punishment) of the entire group. In this way, students may learn to cooperate and even to help each other by joining forces to ensure the group reward. A cooperative learning group is a popular method used to help students who are low achievers. In a meta-analysis of the research in this area, Johnson, et al. (5) concluded that cooperative learning was superior to competitive and individualistic strategies in terms of promoting achievement and productivity. Group contingencies have had wide application and have been successful in increasing academic achievement and decreasing disruptive behaviors.

Group Contingencies and Teams

A group contingency can be used to increase academic achievement by combining the achievement of the individuals. A thermometer-type meter can be used to monitor the progress of the entire class in completing the number of spelling words learned or the number of problems completed. As each individual child completes his/her list, he/she can add it to the group's thermometer to increase the "temperature" toward a certain goal. This type of monitoring is often used for community fund-raisers such as United Way, to show the amount of progress toward a group goal. Individuals can see their contribution toward the common goal, while the entire group reaps the reward.

The classroom also can be divided into teams where individuals earn rewards for their team rather than for the whole classroom. The team approach can be helpful for larger classes; it also can be used to reward groups of students who are performing well, while providing motivation for other groups. For a classwide management system, it can be easier to reinforce a team or group, rather than naming all the individuals in that team. Teams also can be used for individual learning groups for projects.

Token Economies

Token economies can be utilized for a group as well as for an individual performance. The group can collectively earn tokens toward a reinforcer. Individuals also can earn tokens for the group. In this manner, the teacher may have a jar in front of the room in which he/she drops tokens when either the group as a whole or an individual earns a reinforcer. The reward for the token can be determined by the class. For example, once the jar is full, the students can have a party.

Premack Principle

Premack Principle is the concept of using a high-rate activity as a reinforcer for a low-rate activity. In other words, you have to complete an undesired task (a low-rate activity) in order to get to do a desired activity. For example, you have to eat your vegetables *before* you can have dessert. Eating vegetables is a low-rate activity, or the less desired of the two choices. In the classroom, this principle can be used as a group contingency. For example, all students must have their work turned in before going to the assembly or going outside. Behaviors also can be used for a group contingency: "All children must be quiet before we can leave the classroom for lunch."

CREATIVE REINFORCERS

Since variety is one of the key factors in making reinforcers more effective, it is helpful to have unique reinforcers that can provide children either with unique opportunities or with a surprise component to the reinforcement. Listed below are some unique reinforcers that can add to the teacher's repertoire of standard tokens, stars, and praise. Remember that reinforcers are unique to individuals. What is reinforcing to one child may not be so to another.

Spinners

A spinner can be easily constructed by using either an old spinner from a game or by making one out of construction paper. A spinner adds an element of the unknown that can be a motivating quality to the reward. Children spin for their reward. Differing sizes of wedges on the spinner can make highly valued items, such as skipping an assignment, difficult to obtain. Children love the anticipation of spinning and not knowing what the reward will be.

Grab Bags

A grab bag works under the same principle as the spinner; however, with a grab bag, the child reaches into a bag to pull out a reinforcer. While material reinforcers are more easily suited for a grab bag, the bag also could contain slips of paper with activity reinforcers.

Reinforcement Maze

A reinforcement maze is another way to add an unknown component to a reward. A maze is drawn, using boxes or squares in a random fashion to make the maze design. "Magic pens" are used to write hidden rewards inside the squares. Magic pen sets are magic markers that include a clear marker that erases the colored markers. They also can be used in reverse order, that is, the clear marker is used to write a message and the colored marker makes it appear. This type of reinforcer was used as a reward in a peer-tutoring project and proved to be extremely reinforcing (7). Children never knew which reinforcer was in each square. They chose a square and colored over it to reveal the reward.

Reinforcement Pin or Ribbon

A pin or ribbon can be used to designate a special child who has achieved a goal. The child gets to wear the pin or ribbon for a designated amount of time. The pin or ribbon allows others to reinforce the child, especially if it says something such as "I did a good job" or "I got my work done." Other teachers or classroom visitors can comment and give additional reinforcement. Peers also may reinforce the person wearing the pin or ribbon by giving additional attention to him/her.

Dot-to-Dot Maze

A dot-to-dot picture can be used as a reward as well. As children achieve goals, they get to connect one more dot. A reward can be distributed when the picture is completed. The "magic pens" also can be used to add small rewards along the way as well as to add a mystery component. The clear pen can be used to make an X over one of the dots. When the colored pen is used to color over the dot, the X appears.

Unique Sensory Reinforcers

It is important to remember all five senses when trying to determine reinforcers. While most of us can name edible reinforcers (sense of taste), we usually do not remember to use our other senses. Listed below is a brief list of possible reinforcers to use based on the other four senses. Remember to be creative!

1. *Smell:* A smelling box can contain any number of smells, a few of which are listed here. Different scents are collected, and the child can earn either a certain amount of time with the box or a certain number of choices in the smelling box. This can be particularly reinforcing for young children. Possible scents are perfume; extracts such as orange, almond, or cherry; spices such as cinnamon, allspice, or clove; licorice; or incense such as pine or floral, which smells without having to burn them.
2. *Hearing:* Children can earn time listening to records or tapes of music or stories. Headsets for individuals or allowing the group to have music can be used as a reward and also can be educational.

3. *Touch:* Any number of items can be used to stimulate the sense of touch. Children enjoy putting on lotion, powder, or oils. They may enjoy a vibrator rubbed on their cheek or arm. A blow dryer feels nice and warm. Earning time walking in the sandbox barefoot or playing in a water table also are enjoyable. A touching or feeling box can be used that is similar to the smelling box. The box can either be open or closed, where children try to guess what they are feeling. Different shapes and textures enhance the quality of the experience.
4. *Sight:* While children use their sight daily, there are certain experiences that are unique and can be used as reinforcers. Earning time in a closet with a flashlight or glow-in-the-dark toy can be exciting; looking into a kaleidoscope is always fun, or wearing sunglasses or colored glasses also can be a fun reinforcer.

Unique Activity Reinforcers

Privileges and activities are inexpensive reinforcers that can stretch the budget dollar. Young children enjoy helping their teacher, and any number of helping activities can be used. Using this special relationship with the teacher, other privileges include getting to sit in the teacher's chair, holding the teacher's keys when leaving the room (being careful to keep an eye on them!), or using the teacher's pen during writing. Peer influence is strong, and peers can be used to help recognize a student's achievement. The students can all sing a song to the rewarded student, applaud, or shake hands with the student. As a reinforcer, the student may get to choose his/her seat for a day or a period. Less unique reinforcers include access to games or toys, being a line leader, skipping an assignment, or earning free time.

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Chapter 6

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

To maximize the effects of an effective behavior management system, it is beneficial to have not only the support of parents but also their active involvement as well. Parental involvement is listed as one of the highest levels of intervention for several reasons. First, the classroom teacher must have the classroom environment under control, must have the scheduling concerns and roles established, and must have an effective reinforcement system in place. Second, this level depends on someone other than the teacher to be invested in behavior management. It involves relying on others, which is always more difficult than doing something oneself. Furthermore, not all parents are interested in becoming involved in their child's education. For any number of reasons, parents may find any additional work that they have to do more than they can handle. On the other hand, some parents who want to help go beyond helpful or even go overboard in their efforts. Finding a delicate balance can be an art—enlisting parents' support while keeping them in line with the teacher's program. Finally, we need to balance our expectations of what we want from parents and what parents can realistically provide. Getting involved with a child's home situation can get us more emotionally involved with families than we really need to be or want to be. For example, if we begin a home-note system in a family and a child returns bruised after bringing home a poor note, we feel responsible for that child's punishment. While it is not the teacher's fault, we must somehow address the inappropriateness of the parents' actions. In other words, when we involve parents, we must be prepared for any consequences that action might make.

Research has suggested a positive view about involving parents in that adding a home component to a school intervention program can increase its effectiveness. Broden, Beasely, and Hall (2) used parents as tutors to improve academic subjects. They taught parents how to review spelling word lists, how to use a standardized correction procedure, and how to give verbal praise. Tutoring occurred three nights per week. The results of the tutoring demonstrated an increase in average weekly spelling test scores from 41 percent to 94 percent. Gang and Poche (3) trained parents to be tutors for a reading program that was carried out over the seven-week summer vacation. Results demonstrated that parents could learn to be effective tutors, with the children reaching 100 percent accuracy across seven reading skill areas assessed. Swinson (6) used a less-structured reading program in which parents were instructed to listen to their children read each night. Specific correction procedures were taught when a child did not know a word or made an error. Parents also were advised about appropriate settings for after-school reading and about appropriate listening. Reading gains made by the children over the two terms the project was in force ranged from six to twenty months.

Using parents and home as reinforcement for school performance has been effective. Trovato and Bucher (7) used a home-based reinforcement system to nearly double the achievement gains made with a peer-tutoring project. Parents can sometimes offer more potent reinforcers than can be offered at school, such as TV privileges or staying up later. Home notes can be sent by the teacher; thus, parents can consequate academic or behavior changes at home. Studies have demonstrated improvements in academics, with the use of home notes raising math scores from the 47 percent to 77 percent correct range to 91 percent to 100 percent correct (5), and improving in-seat completion of reading assignments from 46 percent to 84 percent (4). Behavioral changes in the classroom also have occurred following use of a home-note system to consequate behaviors. One study demonstrated a 90 percent decrease in disruptive classroom behavior following implementation of a home-note system (1). Parents play an important role in helping students to improve academically and behaviorally.

USING PARENTS AS REINFORCERS

To use parents to consequate behaviors involves setting up a home-note system. Home notes should be simple and direct. Long complex notes that explain behaviors or academic changes are too time-consuming for both the teacher and the parents. If goals are set for the day or for the week, then a simple "yes/no" will be an easy and clear home note. The teacher must gain the parents' support and cooperation for the home-note system to work. A face-to-face meeting is helpful to outline the objective of the home-note system and to get the parents' input on what goals they would like their child to work on. Explaining the positive aspect of the home-note system is helpful since many parents hear only when their children are bad at school. The home note allows parents to hear about their children's accomplishments as well as about their problems.

When building-in the system of consequences at home, it is helpful to give parents suggestions about the kind of reinforcers to use. Parents might think that reinforcers are material goods and that this system will cost them money. Using privileges as reinforcers is an appropriate way to reward children at home. It also is important to build in mild consequences if the child does not bring home a good note. Having to go to bed early or missing some TV time are examples of consequences that can be used at home. There also should be consequences for coming home without a note. No excuses should be accepted for "forgetting" the note. Children can be creative with their excuses, and it is important to keep the child from sabotaging the program by conveniently "losing" the home note.

To set up a home-note system:

1. Contact the child's parents to determine whether they are interested in working with you in a home-note program. Explain what a home-note system entails, that you will monitor a goal at school, a note will be sent home on a regular basis so that the parents can consequate the goal, and the note must be signed and

returned to school so that the teacher knows the parents saw the note. If the parents are agreeable to participating, set an appointment for a face-to-face meeting.

2. Design a home-note system before the meeting. For young children, daily home notes are more reinforcing because young children have difficulty with delayed gratification. A daily home-note system can include the entire week or can be a simple daily note. The note should state the goal or goals and whether the goal was met that day. Figure 6–1 shows two examples of home notes. Some teachers have used a simplified system of red/green notes. The child brings home a red or a green note to denote whether it was a good day (green) or a bad day (red). The parents keep a data sheet at home, usually a calendar, where the daily notes can be tallied across a week. The drawback with this simple system is that there is a minimum of communication between the parent and teacher. Other notes can allow for a few comments.
3. List the behaviors and goals you would like the student to work on and be prepared to bargain with the parents and the child about items on the list. For young children, one to three goals is enough to work on.
4. Explain to the parents and the child at the parent meeting, how the home-note system will work. Talk about how often notes will be sent home, how the parents will dispense consequences and how often, what the consequence will be for not bringing a note home, and how parent and teacher will keep in touch. It is helpful to set up the parent reinforcement component at that meeting because it is too easy for the parents to delay getting started. Ask the child what might be appropriate reinforcers—what he/she is willing to work for. Also, discuss the consequences

Figure 6-1
Examples of Home Notes

Goal	M	T	W	TH	F
1. Do five math problems daily.					
2. Keep hands to myself.					

Daily note for: Debbie Smith

Goal: I will write my letters ten times without interrupting the teacher.

Date: ______________

Teacher's Signature: ______________________________

Parent's Initials: ______________________________

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with the child. Sometimes children think of more punishing consequences than we would!

5. Bargain for goals and what the parents, the child, and you would like to work on. Write clear, concise, measurable goals.
6. Decide on a start date. Discuss how the home-note system will be faded and how to monitor whether the program is working. Remember that you must give

any new program at least two weeks to ascertain its effectiveness.

PARENTS AS TUTORS

Many parents ask if they can work with their children at home. While it is helpful to have parents provide extra help, the parameters of the instruction and the tutoring sessions should be outlined for the parent. Children can get confused if their parents teach them subtraction in a different way than the teacher does. It is important to train parents not only in the correct instruction strategies, but also it is helpful to teach them how to go about working with their child. It is not uncommon to find parents who spend hours a night tutoring their child—eliminating any playtime. To set up a tutoring program for parents, it is essential to spend some time training the parents.

Parameters of Tutoring

Set Time for Tutoring

When setting up a tutoring time at home, it is important for parents to set aside time in which there will be no interruptions, i.e., the same time each night (however, not necessarily every night), and at a time in which the child is relaxed but not tired. Tutoring immediately after school is generally not a good time, since the child deserves a break and some time to relax and have fun. After dinner is often a nice time to tutor because children are not hungry, they have had some play time, and yet they are not so tired that they are ready for bed. Schedule from ten minutes to half an hour. The younger the child, the shorter the session. Let the entire family know that this is a special time between the parent and child, and that there are to be no interruptions.

Relax

Parents should check on their own emotions before beginning tutoring. If they are feeling hassled, tense, or their minds are on their own work, then the session will be stressed. The child may sense the pressure and feel tense himself or herself. It is easier for a parent to be less patient when he/she is not relaxed. Before the tutoring session, parents should take a moment to relax, take a few deep breaths, and set aside the worries of the day. Rather than looking at the tutoring session as a chore or as something that takes time away from other duties, parents should view the session as a special individual time with their child. If the parents feel relaxed, then the session will be more positive and more enjoyable for both the parent and child.

Positive Reinforcers

Parents need to learn how to give praise and positive reinforcers. Using the same principles talked about in Chapter 5, explain to parents the best way to give verbal praise. Emphasize the use of verbal praise and that it should be given frequently and enthusiastically. Back-up reinforcers also are a possibility but should be used only if the child is resisting the tutoring sessions. It is better to use back-up reinforcers for the achievement gains made as a result of the tutoring.

Tutoring Procedures

Parents should be taught what to say during the tutoring session and how to teach. Training is essential, and most parents will be open to the teacher's suggestions—especially if the teacher explains that the child will get confused if the parents teach in a different technique than that used in school. Simple reading programs in which parents listen to their children read are effective, but parents still should be taught how to listen (without interrupting) and how to correct errors. Flash card drills also should have a standard procedure for training. Listed in Figure 6–2 are examples of standard training and correction procedures. Parents need to learn a correction procedure for when children make mistakes. Parents and the child can get frustrated if many errors are made. Having a standard correction procedure will take the pressure off both tutor and tutee since the procedure is preplanned and both will know what to expect. In the heat of the moment, when parents become frustrated, they might make a negative comment that they will regret later.

Troubleshooting

Parents should be told what to do if the session is not working or if things fall apart, for example, if the child starts to cry, the parent gets frustrated. Parents should know it is OK to call it quits at times, although the child should not be allowed to learn that negative behaviors get him/her out of the session. If the sessions continue to go poorly, it is helpful to have the parent come to school with the child. The teacher can sit with both the parent and child and review the tutoring session format. A contract also might be made to enlist the child's support for the tutoring. The teacher should check to make sure that parents are following the parameters of tutoring such as length of time, use of praise, and standard teaching procedures.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

Back-to-school-night conferences can be difficult for teachers and parents, especially if there is bad news. In general, teachers should have an outline of what they are going to talk to parents about. It is helpful to talk a little bit about the classroom curriculum, what the children are studying in school, what can be expected over the next few months, and other general class topics. The conversation then can focus in on their own child. Having examples of the child's work can highlight the discussion. Even though children may bring work home on a daily or weekly basis, having the teacher focus on specific work can help parents to understand more specifically what their child is doing in school. Highlight the positives of the child's performance and, if there are problems, allow the parents to feel that their child is doing well in something despite having problems in other areas. Finish the meeting by asking whether the parents have questions or concerns. If the parents have specific concerns, write them down.

Figure 6-2
Standard Tutoring and Correction Procedures

Flash Card Drills

Math

Tutor: Two plus two equals how many?
Tutee: Two plus two equals four.
Tutor: Good job!

Correction Procedure

Tutee: Two plus two equals five.
Tutor: No, two plus two equals four. Try again.
Tutee: Two plus two equals four.
Tutor: That's better. Nice job!

Spelling

Tutor: The word is "cat." You read it.
Tutee: "Cat."
Tutor: The word is "cat." Let's spell it together (while looking at flash card), c-a-t.
Tutee: C-a-t.
Tutor: (removing card) The word is "cat." Let's spell it together, c-a-t.
Tutor: (card is removed) The word is "cat." Now you spell it by yourself.
Tutee: C-a-t.
Tutor: Good job!

Correction Procedure

Tutee: C-o-t.
Tutor: No, the word is "cat." It's spelled c-a-t. Now you try it.
Tutee: C-a-t.
Tutor: Good job!

Tutoring Procedures

Math

The tutor should have a standardized procedure for reviewing the math procedure as it is taught by the teacher. By using a standard script, the child then learns the process and can use the script independently. Following is an example of a standard script: "Okay, on to the next math problem. First, read the equation (child reads 'two plus two equals how many?'). Now, put down your slash marks. Good, now count your slashes. Good, now write down the number. Great. Read the whole problem now."

As the child gains competency, the parent can remove the prompts and remind the child, "What do we do next?" The child learns to rehearse, i.e., reads the problem, makes the slashes, counts my slashes, writes the answer, and rereads the problem. This provides for independent work habits. Train a standard correction procedure here as well.

"I think we made a mistake. Let's try this problem again. Remember to count your slashes carefully."

Reading

"Let's sound the word out together. R-r-u-u-n-n, run. Now you try it. Good Job!"

This lets the parents know that the teacher is really listening and plans some action regarding their concerns. It also helps the teacher to remember what was discussed during the meeting.

If the teacher has to relay bad news, it is helpful to begin with broad concerns and then focus on the more specific problems. Have some potential solutions available, for example, extra tutoring at home or home notes. If the child needs to be evaluated, give the parents the name of the resource teacher or the school psychologist who will be doing the evaluation. Highlight the positives such as that the testing will help us to understand how the child learns and that extra help will give the child the extra boost he/she needs now so that later on he/she will not be behind. Parents should be made to feel that they are a part of the educational team; therefore, ask their opinion of their child's problems. The case study presented below demonstrates how teachers can offer support and lessen the blow when a child is not performing well.

Overall, it is important to keep parents informed about what their child is doing in school. If a child misbehaves, the parents should be made aware of the problems and *solutions should be offered.* Parents get tired of the complaints only if they feel nothing is being done to alleviate the problems. Parents also may not know what to do when a child misbehaves. Teachers can offer input on what has helped other children in the past and can be supportive of parents in their efforts to control their child's behavior. It is important to convey the good news also. Parents will be more receptive to teachers who continually communicate with them through notes, newsletters, or phone calls. Keeping communication lines open makes it easier if a problem arises later.

CASE STUDY

Erik was having trouble learning his alphabet and, despite extra help in school, he still could not remember any letters. He also confused his numbers and had difficulty remembering the correct sequence of one to five for counting. Behaviorally, Erik had difficulty staying on-task and was bothering his peers who were working. Mrs. Coombs had tried spending extra time with Erik to help him learn. She had moved his desk away from the other children to try to get him more focused on his work. After two months with no academic progress and behavior deterioration, she realized that it might be helpful to have him evaluated to determine whether he had a learning problem. The following conversation took place:

Mrs. Coombs: Hello, Mr. and Mrs. Grant, I am so glad you could come in tonight. I have enjoyed having Erik in my class. He's such an enthusiastic child. He comes in to class every day with a smile on his face. He really enjoys the art projects we have done this year. Here is the pumpkin he made this week. He really worked hard on it. We have been working on learning the alphabet and counting to five. We spend time each day reviewing the letters we have learned and we use the letters in an art project, in our science discussion, and we rehearse them daily. Most of the children are picking up their letters, a few a week. Erik seems to have difficulty with his letters. We go over one letter and I think he has it, but the next day we have to start over. Have you noticed this at home? Do you ever tell him something one day and then he forgets it the next?

Mrs. Grant: Well, sometimes he forgets, but I think he is just being stubborn. He remembers the names of the characters on his favorite TV show. I can never get them straight!

Mrs. Coombs: Well, he seems to really be having a hard time with the alphabet. We also have been working in counting to five, and I have noticed that Erik forgets the counting day to day as well. He seems to want to learn. He enjoys sitting in a circle with the other children, but when it comes down to remembering one to five, he just forgets. Have you tried counting with him at home?

Mr. Grant: Yes, and I know he can't do it. He just runs off and plays. I can't seem to get him to focus on the counting long enough.

Mrs. Coombs: Yes, I know and it gets frustrating for you and Erik too, doesn't it? In class, he has a hard time focusing too. I have tried to work extra time with Erik and I even moved his desk so he wouldn't get so distracted, but it doesn't seem to have helped. I have tried all that I can. When I have a child who I just can't seem to get across to, I often ask for help from other people in the school who have more experience with kids like this. I would like to have them work with Erik a little bit to see if they can help us understand why he is having a hard time learning.

Mrs. Grant: You mean there might be something wrong with him? I think he is a good little kid. He's just not ready to learn yet.

Mrs. Coombs: I think Erik is a good kid too and I feel badly for him that he is having a hard time. He seems to want to learn, but just can't right now. If we can have some of our other people look at him and even test him, we might be able to help Erik better. As it is now, I have run out of tricks to help him. I would like to ask you if you would consider having him looked at so that we can do what's best for Erik.

Mr. Grant: I think we should do something now while he is young. It will be for the better to find out now if he needs extra help. Who do we talk to?

Mrs. Coombs: Here's the name of our school psychologist. She can answer any questions you have about the testing or what she will be looking at. I think Erik is really a sweet boy and he just needs a little extra help right now so he can learn and really enjoy school more fully.

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Chapter 7

USING CONSEQUENCES TO AFFECT BEHAVIORS

While positive reinforcement involves affecting behavior through consequences in everyday language usage, most of us think of consequences in terms of punishers and reprimands. In our A–B–C model of behavior, we use positive reinforcement as a consequence to increase or maintain a behavior. Positives should be our first line of defense in promoting positive behaviors in the classroom. We should choose the behaviors we want to increase in order to promote the educational and social development of our students. However, teachers often have many behaviors they wish to decrease or eliminate. Using punishers is a typical response to changing these behaviors. While using negative consequences can be effective in changing behaviors, they should be used *only after other techniques such as changing the antecedents have been tried.* Negative consequences are too easy to use as the first attack on a problem. The reason that consequences are listed as one of the highest levels of intervention in this hierarchy is that you should be able to avoid many of the misbehaviors in your class through other means. Consequences are covered here in detail, not because they are a preferred approach, but because, since teachers use consequences, it is important to point out less restrictive alternatives and the correct use of consequences. The goal of effective behavior management is for the teacher to teach rather than to discipline all day.

When we work with consequences, we need to return to our assessment of behavior. First, remember the two basic reasons children misbehave: (a) there is a skill deficit, which we have talked about remediating through instruction, or (b) the child is being reinforced for the misbehavior. When we work with consequences, we are trying to change the consequence the child receives for the misbehavior. In other words, we want to eliminate the reinforcement the child receives for misbehaving. For example, if every time a child "clowns" in front of the class, the class laughs, then the child is being reinforced for clowning. However, if we take away the laughter, the behavior loses its reinforcing value. When we change the consequences of a behavior, the child will try harder to get that positive reinforcement until he or she learns that the reinforcement no longer occurs. It is important to remember this because a teacher may give up on an intervention plan before he/she has given it time to work. The behavior typically will get worse before it gets better. For this reason, any intervention tried should be used for at least two weeks. This gives us enough time to determine whether the intervention is having an effect on the child's behavior. Too many teachers give up when the behavior gets worse, thinking that the intervention is not working.

To relate to this phenomenon, we can think of examples from everyday life. Every day you use the same soda pop machine to buy a soda. You put the money in, and your soda comes out. (You are reinforced with a soda every time you put money in.) Then one day you put money in and a soda does not appear. You try again and again and again. (The behavior escalates as you try to get reinforced.) You might even resort to a little hitting on the machine to see if that works. (Frustration may lead to aggression.) Eventually you give up. You have learned that today you will not be reinforced for putting coins in the machine. If this happens for several days in a row, you will stop using that machine and perhaps will try another one; however, if one day you do get a soda, then you will try that machine again.

The same thing happens to little Sammy in your class. When Sammy burps in class, his classmates reinforce him by laughing. He burps, and the class laughs. You might try a punisher such as making him sit in a corner, but he has already gotten the reinforcement from his classmates and your punishment is not effective. To change the consequence, you must take away the laughter of the class. In order to do this, you have to offer the class some reinforcement for not laughing at Sammy. They are getting enjoyment out of Sammy's burping (and maybe even a little enjoyment out of seeing you become angry); therefore, you must offer something else. So, you chat with the class and explain to them that we must all work together to stop Sammy from burping. If they can ignore Sammy's burps and not laugh, they will earn ten points toward a party. If they can reach 200 points (which should give you enough time to stick through your intervention), then they can have a party. The first time Sammy burps and the class does not laugh, he waits, looks around, and waits for the laughter. He tries to burp again, and still no laughter. He may try to burp very loud and may even stomp his feet to try to get attention. Since you are reinforcing the class for every time they ignore Sammy's burps, "Nice job ignoring, class, you earned ten points toward the party," Sammy is not getting reinforced. He gives up for today. He will try again tomorrow, but if the class continues to ignore him, the behavior will slowly drop out. If, however, you have a substitute teacher one day who does not know the program and Sammy is reinforced, the behavior will strengthen again, just as yours did when you got a soda on one day. It is important to be consistent and to stick to the program. Intermittent reinforcement makes a behavior even stronger than if the behavior is reinforced every time.

POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR

In addition to positive reinforcement, there are techniques other than negative consequences that can be used to alter behavior. After all other levels in the intervention system have been tried and you are ready to attempt something else, there are a few additional techniques to use before you try negative consequences. Although the following have high-sounding names, they are probably techniques you have already used, but perhaps in a less systematic manner. They still involve positive reinforcement but they attack it from a slightly different angle.

Extinction

Extinction, or ignoring (deliberate disregard), involves removing the positive reinforcement for the behavior, as in the above example of Sammy. The child has learned a chain of behavior in which, following a behavior, he/she gets reinforced. When we use extinction, we no longer allow the child to receive the reinforcement. As mentioned above, there is a burst of behavior responses, called an "extinction burst," that are used to try to get that reinforcement. Following this burst, the behavior generally tends to decrease as the child learns that reinforcement no longer follows the behavior. Extinction, in the form of ignoring, is often difficult to implement in the classroom, although it can be done. When you ignore, it is important to not give the child any reinforcement. You should avoid eye contact, not talk to the child, not laugh, and should try to completely ignore the student until the appropriate behavior occurs. Obviously, this is not the intervention of choice for aggressive or acting-out problems. However, it can be useful for many verbal behaviors. Figure 7–1 lists typical verbal behaviors and how ignoring can help.

Extinction also is helpful when you know that a child is behaving in order to get attention. Attention-getting behaviors can vary from offensive behaviors such as Sammy's burping to a child's crying every day to try to get comfort from the teacher. Children can be especially manipulative with parents by crying, acting ill, and otherwise trying to avoid school. When you are trying to understand a misbehavior, remember that attention often can be the reinforcement that the child is attempting to receive. By being aware that attention is a powerful reinforcer, you can alter the consequence by ignoring the inappropriate behavior.

Figure 7-1
Using Ignoring with Verbal Behaviors

Behavior	*Intervention*
1. Calling out	Ignore until the student raises his or her hand and is quiet.
2. Interrupting	Ignore until the student is quiet or until you are finished with your converstion.
3. Name-calling	Have offended child ignore the name-calling, perhaps add a reinforcement to ignore.

Differential Reinforcement of Other Behavior

Extinction can be combined with reinforcement to make an even more powerful technique. While ignoring the misbehavior, we can reinforce another behavior. Called "Differential Reinforcement of Other Behavior" (DRO), this technique draws on the positive approach of teaching a new skill to replace the misbehavior; thus, we ignore it when a student calls out your name, and we reinforce it as soon as he/she is quiet and raises his/her hand. Because we are teaching a new skill, we may need to prompt students or remind them of the appropriate behavior. As a child calls out, you might say, "I will call on students who are sitting quietly with their hands raised." This prompts the student to raise his/her hand and to be quiet. You also can use other students as examples of behaviors that are appropriate: "I like the way that Julie is sitting quietly and waiting to hear today's lesson. I like the way Bob and George are sitting quietly." Being noticed by the teacher is a very powerful reinforcer for young children and the class will often fall into line quickly. The disadvantage of ignoring problem behaviors is the same as with extinction, i.e., an extinction burst is still likely to occur. However, since the child is receiving other reinforcement, it is hoped that he/she will learn new behaviors more quickly than by extinction alone.

Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible Behaviors

In a slightly different twist, "Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible Behaviors" (DRI) reinforces behaviors that cannot occur at the same time as the misbehavior, thus eliminating the misbehavior. In other words, you cannot hit someone if your hands are in your pockets; thus, the hitting does not occur. Teachers use DRI when they have children walk through the halls with their arms folded. If arms are folded, then they cannot be used for pushing. If children are working, they cannot be fooling around. To use DRI, you must identify an appropriate behavior that you can reinforce that will compete with the misbehavior. Typical misbehaviors that involve the hands, such as pushing, shoving, hitting, pinching, thumb-sucking, nail-biting, and masturbating, are prime targets for DRI. During transitions, children may be instructed to carry papers or books with two hands to keep their hands busy. When sitting at their desks working, children can be instructed to keep one hand on their papers while writing. Keeping hands clasped while sitting at assemblies or holding an object such as the classroom key may keep hands busy.

USING NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

When we move into the use of negative consequences, we should proceed with caution. Negative consequences can be very reinforcing for the person using them because they can be so effective. An effective punishment, by definition, decreases a behavior. However, some schools have taken punishment to extreme and often violent means. Corporal punishment is still legal in thirty states, with at least one million school children getting paddled each year. Perhaps these schools find the punishment effective in terms of keeping children from misbehaving; but is the price in emotional and physical scarring worth it? Hardly! When we use negative consequences, it is important to use a hierarchy of consequences, just as we are using the overall hierarchy here. Once we get to negative consequences as an intervention, we should use the least restrictive alternative. As we move up the hierarchy, we should discuss the negative consequences with parents in order to seek their approval and to avoid any problems later on. Keep in mind that negative consequences should be used *only after* positive interventions have failed.

NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES INTERVENTION HIERARCHY

Natural Consequences

The most natural and least restrictive intervention for consequences is to allow the natural consequence for the misbehavior to occur. We all are governed by natural consequences, and we want children to become governed by natural consequences as well. A natural consequence is whatever would naturally occur following a misbehavior if we did not intervene. For example, the natural consequence for not finishing your work is to have to complete it later, perhaps at recess or after school. The natural consequence for running in puddles outside is to have to wear wet shoes. Natural consequences should not be used when they endanger a child. For example, the natural consequence for shoving the class bully is to get hit, but this is not a practical or safe consequence.

Reprimands

Reprimands are the most common form of discipline in the classroom. A reprimand is a formal rebuke for a behavior, a scolding; it sends the message that the child has misbehaved. The average teacher uses some type of verbal reprimand every two minutes at the elementary school level (6). In fact, reprimands outnumber praise statements in every grade after the second grade (6)! While reprimands are effective under certain conditions, it is obvious that they can be overused as well as misused. A reprimand also can be stated as a request, for example, "It's time to get working." The message behind the reprimand stated in this instance is that the child is not performing appropriately and is being reminded of the expected appropriate behavior.

Just as there are methods of delivery that make delivering positives more effective, there are similar methods for making reprimands more effective. It is important to remember that in order to make reprimands effective in the long run, they must be reduced in frequency and should be combined with other classroom management techniques (5). The following is a list of techniques that make reprimands more effective.

Descriptive

A reprimand should be descriptive in terms of exactly what the child is doing that is inappropriate or what the child should be doing. In a teaching role, we need to identify what the child is doing that is incorrect and then state what is correct. The child can then learn what is appropriate behavior. Some examples follow:

1. Nonexample: "Johnny, get to work."
   Example: "Johnny, you are not working. You are talking to neighbors and are out of your seat. You need to get back to work."

2. Nonexample: "Boys, cut it out!"
   Example: "Tom and Joe, no running in the class. You need to get to your seats now."

3. Nonexample: "Girls, quiet down!"
   Example: "Sarah and Jean, no talking. You need to work now."

Personality and Eye Contact

Calling out to a general group of children is less effective than using names. When the reprimand is personalized, the child knows that you are talking to him/her. In addition, if you wait and make eye contact, the child and you both know that the message was received. Use the child's name, wait for eye contact, then deliver the reprimand.

Firm, Nonemotional, Soft Voice

A child learns quickly how to push your buttons, especially if you become emotional when you give a reprimand. If you are matter-of-fact and use a firm voice, you can disguise your emotions and be more effective in your delivery of your reprimand. Some children enjoy being able to make teachers angry. The punishment that follows an outburst is not nearly as punishing as watching the teacher get angry is reinforcing. Once you let children get under your skin, you have lost control. After you reprimand a child, you can go into your closet and scream into your coat; but do not let the children see you lose it! Research has shown that using a soft voice that is audible only to the child you are reprimanding is more effective than loud reprimands (4).

Planned Consequences and Follow-Through

Planned consequences are a technique that should be used along with controlling your temper. Mistakes are made in the middle of a rage when no consequences are planned. It is in the midst of anger that parents often say things such as, "I'll throw all your toys out!" or "You'll never play with Tommy again!" Teachers can get caught in the same trap. More likely they also forget to follow-through on reprimands because the class is so busy. If you reprimand a child or make a request, be sure to follow-through. Make certain that the child complies or use a planned consequence. Remember the precision requests discussed in Chapter 6. This is an excellent sequence to ensure follow-through. Once you begin to use precision commands, they will become more natural, and you will be able to follow-through more readily. When a consequence is added to the precision command sequence (following two requests), first, we label for the child the request he/she did not follow. Then we can either model the appropriate response if we feel that the child has a skill deficit, or we can apply a consequence if the child has the skill but is not complying. The sequence, then, sounds as follows:

> "Johnny, sit in your seat and start working, please." Wait three to five seconds. If the child complies, reinforce by saying, "Nice listening, Johnny. I like the way you are sitting and working." If the child does not comply, repeat the reprimand or request with "need," "Johnny, you need to sit in your seat and start working." Wait three to five seconds. If the child complies, reinforce by saying, "Good sitting and working Johnny." If the child does not comply, label the behavior and add a consequence, "No, Johnny, that's not sitting and working. Put your head down." Then, repeat the command sequence, starting at the beginning.

Using this command sequence ensures that you will follow-through on your commands. During the intermission that you are waiting for a response (three to five seconds), you can praise another child, give a request to another child or the class, or continue with your next instruction in your reading group. You would be surprised how long five seconds is! The consequence presented in the example is only one possible consequence. You can choose from any of the consequences we will discuss. If you do not follow-through with your command, the child learns that he or she does not have to comply because chances are there will be no consequence.

Distance

Just as positive statements are more effective if delivered from a close distance, so are reprimands. If possible, you should be within three feet of the child. However, class organization often makes this difficult. Following through will make your long-distance reprimands more effective. If you can, you should try to move about the room frequently. This will allow you to give your praise and reprimands from a close distance.

Praise Should Outnumber Reprimands

Overall, do not overuse reprimands. As discussed in differential reinforcement above, if you can praise children around the misbehaving child, that child often will shape up without your having to reprimand him/her. You can then follow-up with a praise statement to the child. If you are reprimanding constantly, eventually your audience tunes you out.

Reinforce the Next Appropriate Behavior

Once you have reprimanded a child, it is important to reinforce the next appropriate behavior. This moves the child back into positive responding. The child who has been constantly reinforced for negative behaviors will begin to respond to positive statements as well if you can teach him/her that it is more appropriate. Some children misbehave for attention; thus, if you can give them attention for positive behaviors, you can make a difference in the child. Some teachers might complain that a particular behavior-problem child has no positive behaviors to reinforce. You might really have to look hard, but it is essential to find something positive about the child, for example, whether he/she is sitting straight, holding a pencil well, or even breathing!

Overcorrection and Positive Practice

Along with reprimands, you can move to modeling the behavior for the child or having another child model the appropriate behavior. The offending child then must practice the behavior. For example, the class is being disruptive during independent seatwork. You reprimand the class, and remind them of the appropriate behavior. If the class does not respond to the reprimand, you can model the appropriate behavior. You point out a child who is behaving appropriately and have the class look at the child's appropriate behavior. The whole class then must practice the behavior. You request the class to show you the appropriate behavior. After they have practiced, then they continue working. This works with individuals as well. If Jeff is shouting at you for a paper, you have Randy model the appropriate response; then Jeff practices this response. You then can reinforce him for appropriate responding.

One step beyond modeling and practice is to have the child overcorrect the inappropriate response and/or to overpractice the appropriate response. For example, if a child misbehaves by coloring on a desk, he or she must "overcorrect" not only by washing his/her desk, but also by washing all of the desks. In positive practice, a child who runs to the desk might have to practice walking to the desk several times. The overcorrection and positive practice acts must be related directly to the misbehavior. There is a teaching component to the overcorrection in that the child is repeating the correct response many times.

Response Cost

In response cost, the child "pays" for his or her misbehavior by losing points or tokens. The child loses a specified number of reinforcers for the misbehavior. It is important that the points are specified, as in a planned consequence, so that children know what the consequence is. If children are randomly paying points, then the system will be perceived as unfair and unpredictable, as well as unrelated to their behavior. A response-cost system works only if children are receiving reinforcement points or tokens, and these have taken on a reinforcing value. If a child is not motivated by the token economy system, then he/she will not be deterred by response cost.

Contingent Work

We can have children "pay" for their misbehavior through work. If we use an act to overcorrect that is not related to the misbehavior, then we are using contingent work to punish the misbehavior. In contingent work, we make the offending child exert energy to "pay off" the misbehavior. For example, an offending child might have to write "I will not talk in class" 100 times, or might have to run laps in the gym for misbehaving. These consequences are not related to the misbehavior; thus, we lose the teaching component. Instead, we are punishing the misbehavior by making the child exert energy to "pay" for the misbehavior. Contingent work should be used cautiously. A child should not be expected to work to the point of pain or injury. Parental support is recommended for contingent work.

Loss of Privileges

Loss of privileges is another kind of response cost. It can be more punishing than losing points in a token economy because the child is losing something that he/she may consider a "right" or an unconditional privilege. For example, most children have recess, but a child may lose recess for a misbehavior. Children who misbehave when unsupervised often lose the privilege of going to the bathroom when they want to. They may be allowed to use the bathroom only when escorted and only at certain times of the day. Losing privileges can be very punishing for a child, especially when he/she can see others enjoying the privilege. Caution should be taken that loss of the privilege does not cause harm to the child, and that the child is not deprived of basic human needs such as water and food. School administration and parental approval is recommended when using loss of privileges as a punishment.

Time-Out

Time-out is defined as a procedure "in which positive reinforcement is withdrawn for a prespecified period of time following the performance of a misbehavior" (2, p. 71). This means that positive reinforcement is not given during a certain time period. Many teachers and parents believe that time-out means being shut into a room alone. There are many degrees of time-out that can be used effectively as a negative consequence for a misbehavior. When using a time-out procedure, the following sequence for implementation should be followed:

1. *Verbal reprimand:* Tell the child what he/she did that was inappropriate. Remember to use the child's name, establish eye contact, and label the misbehavior, e.g., "Johnny, that's not working quietly." "No, Billy, that's not walking."
2. *Give direction for the time-out:* Tell the child what he or she is to do for the time-out, e.g., "Johnny, head down." "Billy, you need to sit in the time-out chair."
3. *Monitor the time-out:* Ensure that the child does not receive reinforcement. Do not talk to him/her (except if a direction is needed such as, "You need to be quiet before you can go back to your seat"); do not allow others to talk to the child; and watch for reinforcing grins, looks, etc., from classmates.
4. *Release from time-out:* Do not berate for the behavior that got the child into time-out. Give the direction that time-out is over and where the child should go or what the child should be doing, e.g., "Johnny, you can get back to work now." "Billy, you may go back to your desk now."
5. *Reinforce the next appropriate response:* Catch the child being good the next possible moment. This ensures that the child will be receiving reinforcement for appropriate behaviors and is not just being reprimanded, e.g., "Johnny, nice working quietly." "Billy, nice sitting in your chair, your feet are on the floor, and you are sitting flat on your chair."

Several precautions should be considered when using time-out procedures:

1. Check with school officials regarding any policies dealing with exclusionary time-out procedures. It is wise to get parental and administrative support for the more restrictive forms of time-out.
2. Do *not* use time-out when you are angry and as an impulsive measure to "get rid of" the child. Time-out is a *planned* consequence. It should be used as a planned consequence for a misbehavior. Time-out is a punishment procedure and should be treated as such. It is *not* a convenience to get a child out of the room or out of an activity.
3. Do *not* raise your voice and verbally berate the child in time-out. Use a calm, firm voice. When a child is in time-out, do not talk to him/her or allow his/her tauntings to get you involved in a power struggle. Although the child may be calling you names or complaining how unfair you are, do not get "sucked" into a verbal confrontation. Simply remind the student that he/she needs to be quiet before he/she can rejoin the class. When the child comes out of time-out, move on; do not beat him/her up with his/her offense.
4. Reinforce the class for following your instructions and for not paying attention to the child in time-out. If the class is laughing at the child or paying attention to him/her, then the child may be getting reinforced. One difficulty with a disruptive child is that often the entire class is interrupted and is staring at that child. By increasing the reinforcement for ignoring, you can keep the rest of the class under control, for example, "Nice working, class. Joe is having a hard time today, but we are going to just go about our business and not pay attention to him." By acknowledging to the class that a child is having difficulty, it lets them know that you are dealing with Joe's problem and that it is not their concern.

5. Do *not* use extended time periods for time-out. For young children, minutes can seem like hours. Being removed from the class for one minute can be very punishing for a kindergarten student. Again, the length of time-out should be planned and any contingencies for removal from time-out, such as being quiet, should be planned as well.
6. The activity the child is missing must be a reinforcing one. If the child does not care about the activity, then the time-out is not effective because he/she is not missing receiving reinforcement. For example, why suspend a child from school who hates school? The child is escaping a negative place rather than missing a positive experience. Be careful that the child is not manipulating you by using time-out to avoid work or an activity. The child should finish the activity or command that was started before time-out started.
7. Do *not* overuse time-out. Remember that it is one of the most restrictive interventions and should be the last line of defense.

When using time-out, you should use the least restrictive intervention first. The following is a hierarchy for time-out procedures.

Quiet Time

A "quiet time" in which a child places his/her head down on the desk is a mild time-out. During this time, a child must sit quietly and cannot participate in class activities. This is a good procedure to use to get children quiet and refocused on the task at hand. A head down can be used for a short interval, either as an individual or whole-class procedure.

Partial Exclusion

You can grade the amount of removal the child has from the group. In a circle activity, the child may have to move a few feet away from the group. In this manner, the child can see the group but cannot participate. The child can turn around and face away from the group; he/she can hear what is going on and what is being missed, but cannot participate. You can move the child to the other side of the room where he/she can see the class, but, again, cannot participate.

Losing a Reinforcer

By definition, time-out means exclusion from reinforcement; however, you can use specific reinforcers that the child cannot receive or that he/she loses. For example, a child may be allowed to keep a prized possession on his or her desk as long as his/her behavior is appropriate. However, if the child misbehaves, the object is put in time-out, and the child cannot have access to it. The child also may lose access to a reinforcer or privilege. For example, if the child is throwing food at lunch, taking the lunch tray away for thirty seconds can be an effective time-out. Losing a minute of recess or having to wait until the other children have lined up also are brief time-outs. It is a time-out from receiving an expected reinforcer. Parental support is recommended when using this procedure.

Group Contingencies for Time-Out

The group can be enlisted as helpers in a time-out. If a child misbehaves, then the group times him/her out and does not give the child reinforcement. For example, if Dave hit a child during free play, he may need to play alone for five minutes. During this time, he is "timed-out" from the rest of the group. If Joanne has been screaming at her friends, the teacher may have her friends time Joanne out from their interactions by ignoring Joanne's taunts until she is appropriate. Caution should be used so that children are not ostracized by the class or abused by others. Instruct the class on what the time-out means. For example, "Dave hit his friend when they were playing. Dave needs to play alone for a few minutes so he can learn to play better. When Dave is playing alone, we are going to leave him alone and not talk to him or tease him. When he joins us again, we will be friendly and let him play." Parental and administration support is recommended when using this procedure.

Exclusionary Time-Out

Exclusionary time-out occurs when a child is removed from the classroom and is excluded from the group completely. The child may be removed to a partitioned part of the class, to the hall, to the principal's office, to the resource room, or to another area away from the group. Closets or bathrooms are not appropriate time-out rooms. Children should be safe and unable to destroy property or harm themselves. This is the most restrictive form of punishment and should be used cautiously and judiciously. Be sure to have preplanned procedures and time limits. Parental and administration support is essential.

Overall, remember that time-out is a *planned* consequence with specific parameters. It should be used *only* after all other interventions have failed.

TROUBLESHOOTING SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

Books have been written that present specific interventions for specific behavior problems. (See resource list at the end of the chapter for a few examples.) However, it is helpful to identify a few typical classroom problems that are usually handled with punishers to show how they can be dealt with in a more positive approach. By understanding why the behavior is occurring, rather than using a generic punishment for all misbehaviors, the intervention plan can directly address the child's needs.

Swearing

It is quite distressing for teachers to have a kindergarten student let out a string of four-letter words. Before you become angry and march the child to the principal, think for a minute about why he/she is swearing and what benefit he/she derives from swearing. For older children, swearing is often a malicious and conscious behavior, but for young children, swearing is different. First, young children do not know what the words mean and are merely modeling what they have heard elsewhere (often at home). They often use swear words in context; for example, if a child bangs his thumb with a hammer, he/she may let fly an expletive. He/she has probably seen daddy do this, so it seems appropriate. When children swear at you in anger, they are modeling what they have seen happen before. In these situations, it is better to deal with the content rather than to be sidetracked by the fact that the child is swearing. In other words, attend to the real issue. The child is angry and needs to be told how to show his/her anger appropriately. To illustrate, let us say you reprimand a child for a misbehavior. The child gets angry and begins to swear at you. You can label the feeling for him and teach the appropriate behavior. You say, "Sam, you are feeling mad right now. You can tell me you are mad. But remember, when we hit other children, it means we have to sit alone for a minute. When you are quiet, you may join us." In this way you are helping the child learn a new behavior.

If we attend to the swear words, we are teaching only the attention-getting nature of these words. Children learn quickly that swear words get adults' attention quickly. It also makes adults angry and can get them off the subject. Thus, if a child is told to pick up the crayons that were thrown across the room and he/she starts to swear, the teacher might attend to the swearing, get angry, and take the child to the principal's office. The child was successful in avoiding picking up the crayons as well as some class work. The consequence of going to the principal's office may be less aversive than staying in class. If a child gets no reinforcement for swearing in terms either of getting attention or getting the teacher angry, then the behavior will drop out—especially if we also teach new ways of expression. It is better to consequate talking-out behavior rather than specifically to pinpoint the swearing. The swearing will drop out faster if the child learns that it does not work in getting your attention. To intervene with swearing, identify the purpose of the swearing by: (a) attention-getting (intervention—ignore the swearing and consequate other behaviors associated with the swearing such as yelling or talking out), and (b) modeled "appropriate" swearing (intervention—label the feeling for the child and teach the appropriate response).

Fighting

Fighting is one of the more problematic behavior concerns in classroom management because it often takes the teacher away from the other students; if an injury occurs, then the parents of the offended child want justice. There are several situations that occur in the classroom that can develop into fights. Instead of having a generic response to fighting, we can use these situations to help us to determine interventions relating to the specific reason for the fight.

Difficulty Sharing

A fight often breaks out when children have difficulty sharing a toy either by taking turns or playing with the toy together. *Sharing* includes the "sharing of ideas," particularly in deciding what game to play, who gets to be "it," or who can play a game. The reason for the fighting in this instance is a skill deficit. The children do not possess the sharing and negotiation skills to effectively work out the problem. For intervention, a skills training program would be effective in helping children to learn how to share and how to negotiate. Children can role play what to do in specific situations and how to resolve conflicts. Social skills training materials often have ready-made teaching modules in how to share and negotiate.

Taunting/Teasing

Children can be mean to each other, and "name-calling" is a fact of life on elementary playgrounds. A fight often breaks out as a result of the taunting and teasing. Both the child doing the teasing and the one being teased should be involved in interventions.

For the teaser, a consequence for teasing behavior should be planned. The child may lose privileges or points following teasing behavior. A positive component should be included to reinforce appropriate behavior.

For the teased, a skill-building program designed to help the child to cope with and ignore teasing is helpful. Social skills programs can be helpful in teaching children how to ignore, to walk away from, and to cope with teasing. Offering a reinforcer for ignoring can be helpful. Training to help the child make new friends or to improve his/her appearance (if this is a source of teasing) also can be helpful.

The Aggressive Child

Once in awhile you will have a child in your class who has learned aggressive behaviors and finds aggression to work well in obtaining his/her wants and needs. Sometimes the child will come from an aggressive or even violent family, where hitting is accepted as a way of life. In this instance, the child will need social skills training to teach new and appropriate behaviors. You will need a behavior plan including both consequences for negative behaviors, and reinforcers for appropriate behaviors. Contracting can be helpful to monitor appropriate behavior and can include a penalty for fighting.

Talking-Out

An annoying behavior is "talk-outs," i.e., when children call out to get your attention, yell out responses to group questions, or talk to peers during seatwork. For young children, talk-outs are often due to a skill deficit and immature, impulsive responding. By using reinforcement of appropriate behaviors and teaching appropriate behaviors, you can reduce a lot of the talk-outs. Group contingencies also can be used to reduce class talk-outs. The "Good Behavior Game," used by Barrish, Saunders, and Wolf (1), is a group contingency where children are divided into teams and can earn reinforcers for having the fewest talk-outs and out-of-seat behaviors. Token economies also can be used effectively to reduce talk-outs in class by having children lose points for talk-outs and earn points for appropriate behaviors (3).

Examples of an intervention follow:

1. Teach appropriate behavior, e.g., hand-raising, waiting for a turn
2. Reinforce appropriate behavior
3. Reinforce others around the misbehaving child to model appropriate behavior
4. Use a group contingency to get class control
5. Use a token economy.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When using any consequences in the classroom, it is important to consider the impact of those consequences on the individual child and on the classroom as a whole. The importance of using antecedents first cannot be stressed enough. We tend to jump to consequences first because they have worked in the past and there is no doubt that punishment is effective. However, we cannot just take away and extinguish behaviors. If a child disrupts the class because he or she needs attention, when we take away that attention by extinguishing the disruptive behavior, the child's needs are not met. Initially, we must meet the child's needs. To do that, we should give the child the skill he/she needs to gain attention appropriately. If the child learns to use appropriate social skills, then the need to attract attention by being disruptive decreases. *Always* try a proactive approach first.

When you consider using a consequence, first ask yourself whether you have examined all proactive levels of the hierarchy first. Have you asked yourself why the child is misbehaving? Have you changed the classroom environment by moving the child's desk? Have you considered how the child fits into the scheduling? Is it too long a period of time for him/her to sit? Does the child know the rules and routines? Have you examined the antecedents? Are you using effective reinforcers? Have you involved the parents? Now and only now are you ready for consequences. The least intrusive consequences should be used first. It is important not to leap to a tried-and-true consequence such as loss of privileges if a less-punishing technique will work. Each child must be dealt with individually, and we must be sure we are meeting the child's needs, not just our own.

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RESOURCES

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3. Wolfgang, Charles H., and Glickman, Carl D. *Solving Discipline Problems: Strategies for Classroom Teachers.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1986.

Using Consequences

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2. ______. "Ignoring Misbehavior and Setting Goals for Student Behavior." In *The Solution Book: A Guide to Classroom Discipline,* edited by Randall Sprick. Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1981.
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Chapter 8

CONCLUDING REMARKS

While no book on classroom and behavior management can cover every aspect of children's behavior and misbehavior, this publication attempts to cover the entire classroom system in a proactive approach. The hierarchy allows teachers to assess the classroom in a systematic way to determine whether the classroom system is working. If we deal with the potential for misbehaviors before the misbehavior occurs, then we can stay one step ahead of the game. The resources listed at the end of each chapter should provide a direction for teachers interested in further information or specific interventions for more severe behavior problems. Listed below is a checklist to help in assessing the classroom and for troubleshooting behavior problems. If an intervention fails at one level, move to the next higher level. If everything fails, you may want to reassess the problem and/or turn to help from the professionals in your school such as the school psychologist or the special education department.

1. What problems am I having in my classroom?
    a. List
    b. Prioritize problems
    c. Terminal objective (choose one problem, state the problem positively as something you want to attain)
2. Analyze the problem using A-B-C assessment.
    a. State the behavior
    b. What happens before the behavior occurs?
    c. What happens directly after the behavior?
    d. Why is the behavior occurring? Is the behavior reinforced? Is there a skill deficit?
    e. Do I understand why the behavior occurs and how it is being maintained?
        Yes: Go through hierarchy determining the least restrictive intervention to deal with the problem.

No: Brainstorm the problem.

(1) Have I clearly defined the real problem? Did I state the problem behavior clearly? Try rewriting the problem.

(2) Have I determined the antecedents? Have an observer watch the classroom to see if antecedents can be determined.

(3) Have I determined the consequences? Have observer watch for consequences. Brainstorm with other teachers about what consequences are occurring and what the result is.

(4) Is the behavior being maintained by reinforcement? How could the child or children be reinforced?

(5) Does the child possess the skill? Does the child know what is expected?

3. Classroom environment
    a. Desk and table arrangements appropriate for class?
    b. Environment: Distractions? Can everyone see the board?
    c. Classroom flow: Are there places where the traffic patterns cause behavior problems?
    d. Work stations: If used, are work stations in place and appropriate? Is the material self-starting?
4. Scheduling
    a. Does the schedule match the students' activity and attentional levels?
    b. Have I balanced the day with a variety of teaching methods and activities?
5. Antecedents: Rules and routines
    a. Are rules clearly defined and posted? Are the rules age appropriate and stated positively?
    b. Have routines and expectations been taught and practiced? Do children know what to do?
    c. Do I remember to be consistent and reinforce appropriate rule and routine behaviors?
    d. Have I tried to change behaviors by:
        (1) Shaping
        (2) Modeling

        - (3) Prompting
        - (4) Nonverbal signals
        - (5) Precision requests
        - (6) Skill training

6. Reinforcement strategies
    a. Are the reinforcers appropriate? Are they reinforcing?
    b. Do I use reinforcers appropriately?
        - (1) Immediate
        - (2) Frequently
        - (3) Enthusiastically
        - (4) Eye contact
        - (5) Describe the behavior
        - (6) Use variety
        - (7) Close proximity
        - (8) Personalize the reward
    c. Have I tried to change the behavior by:
        - (1) Self-control/self-reinforcement
        - (2) Contracting
        - (3) Token economy
        - (4) Group contingencies and teams
        - (5) Premack Principle
        - (6) Creative reinforcers
7. Parental involvement
    a. Have I tried to get the parents involved? Have I tried a parent/teacher conference?
    b. Have I tried to change the behavior by using the parents as:
        - (1) Reinforcers using home notes
        - (2) Tutors
8. Using consequences
    a. Has all else failed?
    b. Have I tried positive consequences?
        - (1) Extinction
        - (2) Differential reinforcement of other behavior (DRO)
        - (3) Differential reinforcement of incompatible behaviors (DRI)
    c. After considering the ethical ramifications and after

contacting parents and school personnel, have I tried the least restrictive alternatives?

(1) Natural consequences
(2) Reprimands used appropriately
(3) Overcorrection and positive practice
(4) Response cost
(5) Contingent work
(6) Loss of privileges
(7) Time-out hierarchy

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